THE OUTLOOK FOR RELIGION

W. E. ORCHARD

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BY

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To

All who are fighting for conscience' sake;
whether in the trenches, or in prison

CONTENTS

I.—THE QUESTIONS OF THE HOUR

PAGE

1. Will there be any Religion left? 3
2. What Kind of Religion will it be? 23
3. What Type of Christianity will Persist? . . . 47

II.—THE CRY OF THE TIMES

1. The Demand for Reality 73
2. The Charge against the Churches 94
3. The Discontent with Sectarianism 108
4. Which of the Denominatoins will Survive? . . 124
5. The Perils of Pacifism 150

III.—THE HOPE OF THE AGE

1. The Re-commendation of Christianity 175
2. A New Christian Propaganda 200
3. The Social and International Application of Christianity 226
4. The Emergence of a New Catholicism 255

I.—THE QUESTIONS OF THE HOUR

THE OUTLOOK FOR RELIGION

I

WILL THERE BE ANY RELIGION LEFT?

THIS is a pessimistic start. But pessimism is often a good mood to begin with. It at least encourages us to look at the worst facts that can be brought forward and to consider the worst possible interpretation that can be put upon them. If we feel, after due consideration, that these have to be rejected, then we can move towards something more hopeful, without the uncomfortable feeling that we have left unconsidered possibilities behind us. Everyone will recognise that the easy optimism which characterised a good deal of late nineteenth-century thought was dangerous and has betrayed us. The doctrine of evolution was applied to human life so confidently that it came to mean that progress was inevitable to humanity; an irresistible and quite mechanical power was at work in the world which was forcing man upward, whether he would or no. And when we contrasted our state with the pictures of primitive man painted by popular science, and while we were living in the

midst of a perfect rush of scientific discoveries which were revolutionising the externals of life, then the hypothesis seemed to be confirmed: we were progressing, the dark ages were over, man had thrown off his barbarian and animal ancestry, a path of steady moral advance lay before us.

And now? Well, one is not so sure. We are once more back at barbarity. The veneer of civilisation is stripped away, and we are down to all the primitive hates and fears. The war has developed a ferocity and inhumanity which would have been thought impossible a few years ago. We have had to consider the spectacle of the most educated, advanced nation in the world perpetrating the most frightful horrors, crashing through an innocent country with awful brutalities, her soldiery sinking to unmentionable bestialities, and this justified by her statesmen on the plea of military necessity, condoned and even praised by her philosophers and theologians whom the whole world had regarded as foremost in scholarship and ethical enthusiasm. Superficial observers may comfort themselves that the spectacle of Germany is simply a case of atavism, a last throw back to the beast before it expires within us. It is like one of those monstrous births which sometimes appear even in noble families. It is only a "sport," an accident in an otherwise prevailing type. The kindest thing is destruction, and when this is accom-

plished we can go on again with greater security, sure that such a thing will not happen again, at least in our lifetime.

People of deeper thought will want to know what are the antecedent causes of this great human apostasy. Our scholars have been probing down into German thought to see if they can discover the beginnings of this thing; some persons with less claim to scholarship have essayed the difficult task, and are already prepared to publish the results to the world. The Kaiser, Bernhardi, Treitschke, Nietzsche, Bismarck, Hegel, Luther even, are in turn blamed for this horrid defection from humanity. Rationalism, Liberal Theology, Protestantism are pronounced by one hasty explorer and another to be the soil on which this monstrous growth has flourished. But this is getting dangerous, because these things are not confined to Germany. Haeckel has had probably as wide a circulation among the English working classes, thanks to the propaganda of the Rationalist Press Association, as among the German Social Democrats. Our theologians have accepted the researches, and in some cases the conclusions, of advanced German Theology with avidity and gratitude. Harnack's "What is Christianity?" has not only saved the faith of many during a time of strife and confusion, but his position has been accepted by not a few in the ministry, and, whether its origin is known or not, it is the religion

of the majority of our thoughtful laity. The French theologian, Auguste Sabatier, took much the same position in his "Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion" and his "Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit." Liberalism in theology is with many of us still the one hope of saving Christianity for this age, and has been hailed by not a few as the veritable Gospel. And if Protestantism is to be blamed for Germany's downfall, how long will it be before the other great Protestant nations, Britain and America, show the same symptoms of disease? There is at least a call here for careful judgment.

Moreover, in order to crush this monstrous growth, what do we who hate it have to do? We have kept ourselves free from the more violent outrages of international law, and we believe that our soldiers, even if they were let free in the flush of victory upon German soil, would never repeat the story of Belgian atrocities. But we do find that to crush an enemy in war one does have to consider military necessities before ideal principles. Fortunately we have a mighty Navy which is able to exert pressure in a quite gentlemanly way. We can trust the chivalry, the humanity, the unfailing good humour of our men to treat the enemy, when wounded or prisoners, with kindness and honour. But does anyone suppose that in the frightful struggles of a bayonet charge all

soldiers do not have to put off the civilised gentleman and fight like devils? The tragedy is that to crush this monstrous manifestation we have to adopt much the same methods and rely upon the same primitive passions. Whoever is responsible for recalling these things to life, they are not dead, and they will not be the quicker extinguished for the temporary licence that has had to be granted to them.

The truth is, behind the European man, not to mention the European woman, there is a savage, and if we are going to prepare for wars and wage wars, from whatever motive, then we shall want that savage kept alive. With characteristic frankness and brutality this has been recognised in Germany. It has even become a philosophy. In other countries, and notably in our own, we do not discuss this sort of thing. Like prostitution, it is not talked about in polite circles, but the safety of our homes is built upon it all the same. Germany has thrown over the restraints of sentimentalism and has in greater degree than other nationalities repudiated Christianity as inapplicable to State affairs and International relationships. Other countries have not openly admitted this to be necessary, but in practice we all have to follow much the same course.

It might be held, therefore, that the war has altered nothing. It is only at such times that we

know ourselves, that we discover just how much of our religion we live by. There is no new situation created, save that the compromise is exposed; which may be in some respects an ethical advance. There is as much Christianity now as there was before the war, and there will be as much after; no more, perhaps, but no less. Yet this rigorous and rather refreshing judgment overlooks the fact that restraint has the value of keeping before you an ideal, even if it cannot be closely followed. We many of us have moments of evil passion, impure thoughts, diabolical suggestion. It is not at all certain that these would be got rid of the sooner if only we allowed them to have expression. We watch ourselves all the closer because we know of our temptation. We allow to something higher in us the superior right to dictate and control. Restraint will kill these things much quicker than giving them rein. Evil as well as good can die of atrophy; an organ that is never allowed to function is in time paralysed. Even the conventional recognition of Christianity, however much its hypocrisy excites the scorn of some of our sarcastic moralists, is a witness to something in us that agrees with it. Something in us believes the Beatitudes, even though as a matter of business we should never dream of putting them into practice. There is something extraordinarily attractive in the Sermon on the Mount, even if its adoption would dis-

organise society. It is really no cure for moral hypocrisy to say that we do not care for the heights merely because we cannot attain them. That is simply to exchange one hypocrisy for another. It is possible that before the war no one really believed in Christianity sufficiently to practise it, but it is questionable whether we have got any further when even professing Christians have concluded that it *ought not* to be practised. However unideal it be, it is certain that the great majority of people are restrained by accepted beliefs, by the opinion of society, by the vision of those who have seen for themselves. Nothing is finally secure until everyone believes on personal conviction, whatever others may think, and guides his life by an authority his whole being can accept; but we are not helped on towards that by repudiating all ideals, all social restraints. If we could successfully destroy the external and conventional recognition of religion, that of itself would certainly not hasten its inner and real recognition.

But it will be denied that war time has entailed any repudiation of Christianity as far as we are concerned. It is held most firmly by the vast majority of Christian people in these islands, and almost without dissension among the leaders, ministers, and theologians, that the wonderful response of our youth at the call of their country has been equivalent to a great confession of faith

in Christian principles. That the whole country should have seen its course so clear when Belgium was invaded, and that, at the cost of whatever sacrifice, practically the whole of the available manhood leapt to its protection, is an indisputable proof that this, after all, is fundamentally a Christian country, as evidently so as Germany is evidently not; and that, despite all our fears, the young men had the root of the matter in them. There had been a good deal of headshaking over the young men. They seemed out only for a good time, they were utterly careless about religion, they would not respond to the call of Christ. But their patriotism, heroism, good-humoured endurance of suffering and cheerful facing of death prove that all the time they had really understood and were only waiting the call to something definite. Any questioning of this seems only like disparaging what they have done. The slightest suggestion that there were other elements in that response beside the agonised call of Belgium has to support itself by ungenerous suspicions and carping criticism. Since the world began it is to be questioned whether there has ever been a nobler response than that which the youth of England has made.

The war has surpassed all the heroisms of the past. Never again can the charge of selfishness, slackness, effeminacy be hurled at our genera-

tion. But what this really proves is simply that human nature is capable of great sacrifice, that youth only wants a real chance to display heroism. For this is no distinctively Christian thing, otherwise we should have to allow not only that the French youth were similarly moved by Christianity, a thing that our ultra-Protestants would hardly admit, but that all down the ages, back to Carthage and Sparta, Christian principles were the cause of patriotism. We need look no further than patriotism itself, a natural instinct which requires no theological sanction or Christian motive. There is also no need to question that, so far as the British people were concerned, this war was not sought by them, was indeed thought to be so unbelievable that a majority of them would not consider its possibility or prepare against it; that without the invasion of Belgium it would have been impossible to have united the nation in accepting the war; and that without the record of atrocities it would have been impossible to have introduced the idea of crushing Germany. On the facts before the nation, and if uncaring abstention was the only other alternative, the nation certainly chose the better course. But that does not close the question whether the diplomatists and politicians, the newspaper proprietors and financiers, have ever represented the nation, and whether they have not used this splendid idealism for quite

other ends; for they have certainly done their best to destroy it. Nor does it close the consideration whether war is a Christian way of doing things, even of righting wrong and resisting aggression, or whether the Church could not have found a better way.

But we have to face the fact that this splendid moral awakening and wonderful national unity does not show any signs of leading to a religious revival or awakening a national consciousness of God. At the outbreak of the war there was a confident expectation that it would bring a religious revival. It was long overdue, and the signs were propitious. Let us record what some of those hopeful signs were.

In the closing years of the nineteenth century Christianity was fighting what looked like an almost hopeless battle with intellectual difficulties. The critical examination of the Bible had seemed to many the end of all things; but it at length gave rise to a stronger conviction of the reality of its inspiration and a clearer conception of the actual message of the Bible to mankind. It is not too much to say that on the old theory of the verbal and equal inspiration of every part of the Bible, its message was a very confused one. It gave equal value to ceremonial and ethical religion, to personal and doctrinal devotion. On the old understanding it really did sanction slavery, polygamy,

cruelty, persecution. But criticism restored the prophets in the Old Testament, and the Synoptics in the New Testament, to a regulative position. And this broke upon the world like a new revelation. There was confusion for a time, especially in the realm of Christology; for because Christ was seen to be human, according to the Synoptics, it was open to be denied that He was divine; but deeper thought soon moved to the right conclusion that He was a Divine Person in human flesh and the manifestation of what Deity actually is.

The battle against determinism had gone very hard, and in many quarters Christianity was being adjusted, not without serious loss, to the mechanical-evolution scheme. Transcendence was abandoned for immanence, and God was in danger of being identified only with what was discoverable in nature and possible to man. If Christianity was going to endure it seemed that it would be only in a pantheistic form; and this meant reducing its energy to a standstill, its doctrines to uncouth symbols, its great experiences to simply looking at things from the right angle, and Christ to a mere symbol or even a myth. And then from the camp of the apparently victorious enemy there came sounds of dissension. Pure physics began to question the mechanical scheme, pure biology refused to accept the chemical interpretation of life, pure

philosophy began to criticise the static Hegelian rationalism. Science declared that movement, life, progress were not self-explanatory, but, from the point of view of naturalism, a sheer miracle. Not only was creation no longer scoffed at as an impossible idea, but it was discovered that there was continual creation going on both in the material and the biological realm. Philosophy began to discern that more than rationalism is needed to discover truth and more than a logical statement to embody it. Truth is possible only to the whole personality, both in its search and in its response. This looked as if personality and not mechanism was seated at the heart of things. So far, then, from religion being a crude feeling after philosophy, the facts were the other way round; philosophy was a mere abstraction of the truth of the religious life. Psychology began to discover that the human intellect, instead of being a mere logic machine, was swayed by motives far beneath the penetration of conscious thought; that there were realms of unconscious activity which showed that even sudden conversions were not abnormal; and that there was possible ground in reality for many of the hastily dismissed miracles which had been recorded as accompanying epochs and individuals of great religious insight.

With this change of thought Christianity seemed about to enter upon a new era. A real in-

terpretation of Christianity in the light of modern knowledge was seen to be possible without a painful process of continual surrender and reduction of its fundamental truths. All that was wanted now was not so much an intellectual demonstration of the truth of Christianity as its practical embodiment in personal and social life; it was not whether it was true, it was whether it could be shown at work. Everything was ripe for revival. The call was clear; rivals and substitutes were beaten off the field.

Then there came the shock of the war. This did not find the more recent theology wholly unprepared. The newer methods of criticism, as well as the revolt against mechanism, were allowing us to reinterpret the Apocalyptic teaching of Jesus as eminently sane. The New Testament was not built upon the "inevitable advance" theory. It believed rather in a great struggle and perhaps a hopeless night as the prelude to the great deliverance and the morning of God. It was seen that Apocalyptic dominated the outlook of Jesus and interpreted His own self-consciousness, and there was no longer any need to apologise for its view of reality and its expectations concerning progress. It was exactly along such lines that biology pictured the movement of life: a series of struggles, crises, set-backs and forward rushes.

No wonder, then, that the outbreak of the war

was expected to revive religion. And hopeful signs were immediately manifest: the deep seriousness of the people, the mystic experience of the new recruits, the calling of meetings for prayer and intercession. It was rumoured that in France and Hungary especially there was a great return to the historic faith and a crowding to the churches. And then somehow everything seemed to drag. The churches were not long crowded; there was no increase in membership, intercession services began to drop away, religious hope began to wane. The revival was not only strangely postponed, but seemed to have been killed.

The public are difficult to satisfy. They came to church in the early days of the war to hear what the Christian preacher had to say; and then came no more. If we had said that the war was wrong and unchristian they would have hanged us and burned our churches about our ears. But somehow they treated us even worse when they heard what we had to say: that this was a Christian war and our one loyalty to the Kingdom of God demanded its prosecution at any price to a victorious conclusion. Why did they not continue with us? Because they could hear that very well elsewhere—in secular gatherings and in the Press—without the complication that Christianity seemed to bring in. There were a noble few who took the middle view that there would have been no war if the nations

had been Christian, which seemed to cast a reflection on us somehow; who taught us that we must love our enemies even while we were hacking them to pieces or starving them into surrender, but that seemed to weaken determination, and was not as a matter of actual experiment found to succeed on the battlefield, as some soldiers found to their cost. There were those who said that we must see to it that we did not make anything out of this war, and afterwards we must be prepared to give and take in order to create a world in which there would be some prospect of stable peace. But when one came down to details, as the headmaster of Eton in an unguarded moment chose to do, one saw that there was a different interpretation of the war gaining ground. The declaration of *The Times* that we were fighting for ourselves, the movement to capture German trade, the determination that the only way to establish a world peace was for Britain to keep it; these things prevailed over the attempt to keep a better ideal before the people; our newspapers and rhetorical politicians have these matters now in hand.

Those who took the frankly Imperial outlook, and who told us to put aside all squeamishness, to regard the killing of Germans as a part of Divine Service, to exact a life for a life for all atrocities, did not satisfy the fickle public either. Because you can get all that sort of thing so much fiercer

and better put in *John Bull, The New Witness,* and *The Daily Express.* The pulpit plays this tune far too soft for those who have been used to the megaphone and steam-hammer Press.

The Anglican Communion, with a temerity which that body has perhaps never before attained, attempted to organise a great call to Repentance and Hope, and this was set about in an entirely praiseworthy way. The leaders must have known that there were national and certainly ecclesiastical risks in such a movement. If anything like a great religious revival was to sweep the country, it might most seriously interfere with the national prosecution of the war. When religion once gets going it is likely to be a fairly absorbing and unpredictable affair. If, on the other hand, the Mission has no results, it will certainly not help to arrest the declining prestige of the Anglican Church. It is early yet to prophesy what the ultimate effect will be, but its public start was unfortunate and uninspiring. The controversy over women preachers was a lamentable thing in the circumstances, and it is by no means settled by the compromise that was accepted.

But the necessity for assuring the people that there was to be no repentance for the country being at war shut out certain areas from the fire of the Holy Spirit, which seems to have had the effect of shutting Him out altogether. God may be

rightly invoked for special purposes, but something has gone wrong when it is also stated what He is not wanted for. Even Bishops cannot control the Holy Ghost this way.

The conditions from the religious point of view are more unpropitious. The whole nation and the whole mind of the people is clamped down to this one thing, the winning of the war, and we are told in every speech of our leaders what alone will win it, namely, men, munitions and money. Every nerve must be strained, every penny must be spent, the last drop of blood must be spilt if we are to win, and unless we win it means the end of liberty and civilisation. We need not think about what is going to happen after the war; indeed, it is a duty not to think, but to work. This all has its effect upon the general mind, even upon the ecclesiastical mind. A few earnest people try to make us believe that prayer is one of the weapons that we may put beside high-explosives in efficiency, but this doctrine does not find favour, one suspects, with the Ministry of Munitions or with the War Office. No one who promised to spend sixteen hours a day in prayer would be granted exemption from military service on the ground that this was work of national importance.

The general effect is obvious. It is seen that spiritual forces do not really count. They may in some mystical sense. The conviction that ours is

a righteous cause may enable a man to fight better, but unfortunately that conviction is shared by all the armies of Europe, including those of the enemy, and the enemy's conviction will probably increase as the balance of the offensive passes to our side. There are few people who can pray with any degree of sincerity that our shells may shatter better than those of the enemy, or that our blockade may be made more and more effective. Rightly or wrongly, and despite the assurances of theologians, prayer falters at this business. Those of us who pray about the war at all pray for the preservation of our loved ones in the deadly struggle, and we have no power left to pray for anything else.

For those who are chiefly interested in the future of religion this is rather a gloomy time. There are those for whom the problem of evil, a burden heavy enough before the war, has now become too much. Faith in God has collapsed. Soldiers seeing the sights of the battlefield have very grave doubts whether there is anything holy about war or whether it can accomplish any good. Many of them have found God in the face of death, but many have lost their faith entirely and see only a world in which savagery and mechanical devilry rule. What many more must feel is that Christianity is not practicable. They know that this is not the way of the Cross. Jesus did not suffer in

the attempt to slay or punish His enemies. And, after all, He had to die. No nation can be expected to do that for the sake of truth. The talk about spiritual power is seen to be useless. The bed-rock facts of this world are evil, and nothing but the borrowing of evil will overcome them. The only way to defeat hell is to steal its weapons; the only way to outwit the devil is to copy his devices. Religion does not count.

Does this mean, then, the end of religion? By no means. Why? Because religion is far too deep a thing to be really amenable to any such conclusions. It may mean, probably will mean, that many who have accepted the ordinary religion will find that in face of the facts of life they can do so no longer. But there will be others who will feel just as keenly that religion is the one thing left. Man cannot do without its consolations, and his need is so great that in face of all the facts in the world, and against all the logical demonstrations that it is unreasonable, man, as a whole, would still remain religious. If religion were proved untrue, then man would prefer not to believe truth; for, after all, there is little agreement as to what truth is apart from religion, whether its ideal is attainable by man, or whether the word really has any meaning. Religion has nothing to fear from rationalism. There may be a great turnover of opinion, as there always is as the result of such catastrophes, but it

will be in both directions. Religion will not really lose by it. And beyond these natural causes there is with us a far greater conviction. God is; and so long as man also is there will be religion. Religion may change; almost certainly will change as the result of the war. There need be no doubt as to its remaining.

II

WHAT KIND OF RELIGION WILL IT BE?

Previous to the war there was a fairly widespread opinion that Christianity was played out. It was not a particularly well-informed opinion, and it was probably held by those who had little inside knowledge of Christianity or who had never experienced its soul-renewing power. Some, of course, held this opinion in the belief that the great nineteenth-century battles between philosophy, science and religion had gone against Christianity, and that for all intelligent men it was now finally discredited. Outside a few intellectuals who professed an anti-religious philosophy, and who were able by their subtlety or their elusive wit to keep up a variety of attacks on faith, and score off absurd individuals who were simple enough to take up their challenge, these opinions only flourished amongst those who were living on second-hand doubts or only attracted that larger body of people who call themselves modern because they have just caught up to the intellectual fashions of the previous decade, and are quite unaware that more recent thought has already made all these things appear

more out of date than the speculations of the early Greek philosophers. In a country of widespread but superficial education, and where it has become the fashion to appear emancipated and advanced, there is always a very large number of persons who either live in a weekly whirl of latest ideas or, panting after more stability, are yet never able to catch up to anything less than twenty-five years old. The great changes of opinion that have overtaken recent philosophy and science are still unknown in these circles. And then there are the conventional and loosely attached Christians of our time, kept in scandalous ignorance by the Churches' lack of instructional method, who are just discovering Darwin, Spencer or Emerson, and are suffering vicariously all the throes of the mid-Victorian controversies in vain.

But there are more serious persons than these to consider, who also are persuaded that Christianity is done, because they notice the inability of its most earnest professors to live in their own times and to respond to the demands of the age. Those who have the most undisturbed faith seem to bury themselves in the past; your militant High Churchman is still sighing after the Middle Ages and regretting the Reformation; while those who are anxious that the Church should speak to this age only land us in a maze of modern discussion on subjects like socialism, suffrage, and sex, through

which they are quite unable to lead us, and eventually fall back on such vague generalities that what is wanted is Christianity, without being able to tell anyone what Christianity has to say to these things. Meanwhile Churches continue their old controversies about vestments, infant or adult baptism, Establishment, Kikuyu and similar matters; which, if not exactly like fiddling while Rome is burning, looks like tuning up for some such performance.

It might be admitted that there is a great stirring of concern in all the Churches, plenty of self-criticism and endless conferences; but actual adventure, and the power to get any sort of united action on anything that really affects the needs of the people, are noticeably wanting. Among the majority of those attached to the Churches there is obviously a faintness of conviction and a fading of enthusiasm. Any sense of possessing an Evangel for the Age is utterly lacking. Those who think they have discovered what is wanted are soon found to be only rehashing long-played-out heresy, some discredited philosophy, or proposing some impossible return to mediæval conditions. It all looks as if Christianity had lost the power of going any further; it either remains immovably fixed or simply goes to pieces.

Earnest seekers are therefore on the look out for another religion; for we have at least got as far

as recognising that some sort of religion is absolutely necessary. Very few turn nowadays to secularism, atheism, or even agnosticism. The desperation of our need is evidenced by the attention that is being paid to the older religious faiths; not merely with the desire to study their beliefs and customs as things of human and historical interest, but in the fevered hope that perhaps they contain the secret of salvation. Nothing is more symptomatic of our condition than the proposal to adapt Buddhism to the West and the strong attraction that some of its doctrines have for the modern mind. That many of its fundamental ideas are crude and its basis an absolute pessimism; that it can be a gospel only for those who believe that man is chained in an unending series of reincarnations and transmigrations, does not seem to worry these wearied seekers after rest. They are willing to accept the undemonstrable theory of reincarnation simply in order to be saved from it. There are even attempts being made to recommend the Koran as a probable source of truth and Mohammedanism as a worthy substitute for Christianity. A few distinguished savants, who would have been secularists a generation ago, but to whom that refuge is now closed by the recent researches into anthropology, have been so impressed by the universality, the creative inspiration, and the fundamental need of religion, that they propose to get back to what is

now considered its most primitive form, that which expresses itself in ceremonial, inhibiting, of course, all the intellectual constructions that were superimposed by the mendacious race of poets and theologians.[1] There have been frequent examples of those who, charmed by the unclouded Greek mind with its unconsciousness of sin, have urged its superiority to Christianity;[2] but these new proposals take us much further back, and desiderate a return to communal nature ceremonies. The next step will surely be to discover what is the religion of the advanced quadrumana; for if we only widen the term sufficiently it may be found that they possess one; and to recommend this as the consolation to which the modern mind should now betake itself. It would be easy to wax satirical over these attempts, were they not pitiful testimonies to man's unsatisfied need. And it is certainly not becoming for Churchmen to scoff at these wild proposals, and too late in the day for Catholics to inform us that Christianity contains all that was worth preserving in these religions. For how does it come to pass that people do not easily recognise that they have close at hand what they are pursuing down these dim centuries, save that they have so long been presented with only a truncated Christianity?

[1] *See* Miss Jane Harrison's "Themis."
[2] Mr. G. Lowes Dickenson, for instance.

It is in obedience to the same instinct that others, feeling that a return to any of the older religions is absurd, have proposed that we should select those great truths which each of them contains and construct a new eclecticism; or find an interpretation of their common basis which explains all their varying forms and ceremonies. It is Theosophy which has done most to popularise this notion, and has confidently announced an esoteric clue which shows that all religions teach the same truths under different forms. Theosophy has done a valuable service in persuading a lot of not very deep-minded people, who previously would have been anti-religious, that there is something more in religion than the average devotee or the average anti-religious realises. Its great difficulty is that the only religion of which it can make nothing is Christianity; which refuses to be reduced to symbolic form, repudiates any esoteric secrets, and announces itself to be the reality which all other religions have groped after. Christianity professes to hold the clue to all other religions, because it sets forth, not as symbol, but as the ultimate personal reality, one who is the Desire of all nations. Still, Theosophy may advance to make that discovery, for in many respects it is not far from the Kingdom. But its existence would have been made impossible if Christianity had not been presented as intolerant to, and independent of, all other

religions; a position that the Bible itself completely contradicts.

There have been other attempts to find a universal basis for religion; one that has attracted considerable attention being that of Bahaism, which proposes a universal faith in God and a universal brotherhood of man. It has had some heroic moments and some saintly interpreters, but save as a possible stepping-stone from Mohammedanism to Christianity it has nothing to teach the Western world. A religion of faith in God and universal brotherhood has been proposed again and again. The difficulty is to find any true basis for such a faith and any power to bring it into action. It has been the claim of Christianity that in the Incarnation we have the final basis for faith in God, and in the Cross the great reconciling agency. But somehow this faith has not been made clear, and we have been unable to set the Cross before men after this fashion; and now we are faced with the nemesis of our failure in numerous movements which propose that we could attain these things all the better without Christ and without the Cross. Even professing Christians have advocated the union of all the Churches on the basis of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man—apparently with little knowledge that a religion of this kind was tried as far back as Stoicism; with little more than pious maxims as a result.

Breaking out on quite new lines, we have to notice Spiritualism, Christian Science and the various New and Higher Thought movements, together with the remarkable revival of interest in mysticism of the less definitely Christian type. Each one witnesses in its turn to needs that have not been supplied by conventional Christianity. Spiritualism ranges from scientific Psychical Research to the crudest acceptance of séance utterances and mediumistic dodges. It represents too pathetic an attempt to pierce the veil not to deserve our sympathy, but the confused and cruel teaching concerning the after life with which Christianity has remained content, as well as the reaction from the materialism which has dogmatically denied the other life, must share the responsibility for its dangers and delusions. Christian Science has been the most remarkable modern movement in religion, and has had a prodigious growth. Its philosophy is nothing more than a jumble of hypnotic ideas, and while it produces at first a deeper peace than the older faiths can give, the effect of shutting down the mind against unpleasant facts must either end in complete stagnation or suffer shipwreck on the sterner realities of life. The great Christian Science newspaper does not publish any stories of crime, but it has to tell its readers how the Great War is going, though it does not descend to details. It would, perhaps, have been better if some

of our newspapers had devoted less energy to deliberate atrocity-mongering; but, on the whole, to face the worst, even when exaggerated, is safer than to hypnotise the mind with artificial optimisms. Nevertheless, Christian Science shows that people will follow definite teaching, however erroneous or difficult, and all these systems reveal the failure of the Church's present preaching system which seeks to inspire without informing. The various forms of subjective mysticism witness to the reaction from a barren rationalism, they provide that internal quiet which modern life denies us; but it is tragical to think that the Christian religion once provided all this with an objective faith and within a sacramental system, apart from which these new mysticisms only become foggy or self-deifying cults.

It would be interesting to know just how all these new movements have fared during the war, but in the nature of the case no reliable information can be gathered. One would be inclined to conclude that Christian Science would be hard hit by the war, and that Spiritualism would attract hosts of anxious inquirers; but in both cases this is probably wrong. The "Thoughtists" must be severely put to it to discern what thought can accomplish in events like a world war; but they are no worse off than Christians with their prayers. It will probably not be far from the truth to say that these movements have failed to gain further ad-

herents in any large numbers in the present conditions. At least, we have one significant symptom: so far, there has been no new religion founded during the war, which, in these over-complicated days, is something to be thankful for.

But there has been no visible movement back to the Churches. There has been a desire for closing up the Christian ranks; unity has been talked of, proposed, and some tentative steps made towards it. The Federation of the Free Churches has come nearer realisation. The great movement for Church Unity originated in America, which proposed to work towards a "World Congress on Faith and Order," at which every Christian Church should be represented, has not found war time propitious for pushing things forward, but has been content to mark time in the hope of better days coming. But there is no popular demand for unity; no sign of one of those great movements of will and power which sweep officialdom and prejudice aside and are able to effect great changes at great speed. If this instinct had showed itself strongly, and conferences of Christian leaders had been demanded by the rank and file, we should probably have been led to find a Christian ending for the war, and thus have discovered a way to unity that nothing would have closed. But not only have the old suspicions and constitutional timidity sufficed to prohibit anything more than the feeblest advances,

which have not been sustained, but the national unity has proved the foe of any Christian Internationalism. The World Alliance for Promoting Friendship among the Churches has kept its machinery going, and even perfected it, but it is quite understood that there must be no attempt to put this machinery into motion during the war. A unique private gathering, representative of British Christianity, was effected soon after the outbreak of war, but it was much more conscious of its British citizenship than of its membership in the Catholic Church, and was content to affirm the righteousness of the national cause. And now anything like an Ecumenical Council, which might have been possible in the early months, besides being objected to by most of the parties that could be called to it, would certainly be prohibited by the various belligerent Governments. Everything must be done to keep the Church in its place, the mere handmaid of political power and sanctifier of military measures; and in this design most Church leaders are vigorous and adroit supporters.

There are probably indications that the war is leading to a closing up of the ranks on doctrinal matters. There is a swing back to orthodoxy, a feeling after dogmatic assurance concerning fundamentals. Everyone sees that Christianity cannot fight its battles amid these choking theological fogs. But some who are backing to orthodoxy are doing

so with a clearer and perhaps revolutionary view of what it entails. Convictions about the Absolute Deity of Christ, the Final revelation of the way of God in the Cross, the Divine institution and investiture of the Church with the power of the keys, are bound to raise suspicions about this new alliance with the State in its redemptive way of war. But there is really nothing of a movement afoot at present. A few individuals who have seen the issues lit up for them by the war, and have come down on the Christian side with a determination to die in or die for this faith, even if they have to do it alone, may be making a track across the wilderness which may yet become a highway, but they have not yet got further than pushing a few stones out of the path.

It is to be feared that there is a more general idea that the war has provided the final example of the failure of Christianity. It has not restrained the Christian nations, it has not secured a faithful following among those who profess it, it has had little influence over the great mass of the people. The answer that this only proves that Christianity has either never been tried or has simply been rejected even by its most earnest supporters, does not really meet the situation. For it still remains true that it has not had power to constrain people to its practice. Its chief influence has been in the realm of the personal, and to that it has become more and

more confined. It has not been able to affect the social and international realms.

A good deal of this failure will be traced to its fatal ambiguity about war. While the professional theologians are trying to prove that the Sermon on the Mount has no reference to an international situation, and that the application of non-resistance to the circumstances of war is crude and unwarrantable, it remains obvious that Christianity does contain a modicum of very perilous pacifism, not only in some of the sayings of Christ, but in the very principle of the Cross. Book after book has been written to show that these are literal, sentimental, unscholarly or immoral interpretations. Jesus would never have said anything that was so against common sense and the natural instinct to defend yourself and your loved ones. He accepted the State, and therefore war, and He never reproved a soldier or called any man from the ranks of the army to follow Him. If Jesus did say anything that might be interpreted as meaning non-resistance, then it must be remembered that He thought the world was going to end shortly. His was an "interim ethic" that has been abrogated by the fact that, quite unforeseen by Him, the world has progressed to a civilisation that is partly Christian. Moreover, the Cross is really the sanction of just such a war as this, for the Cross means sacrifice, dealing seriously with sin, sparing not even

the Only Son, who laid down His life to save others because He would not save Himself. The national rising to save Belgium, or even to protect our dear ones, is Calvary over again; it is the soldier who has taken up the cross and followed Christ. The great issues between ourselves and Germany are fundamentally those of "the Pierced Hand" against "the Mailed Fist," Calvary against Corsica; we are fighting for the Cross. Therefore this is a crusade; it is a holy war. Or if there are some who discern that this is going a little too far, who cannot help remembering that Christ did not lose His life in trying to save His mother or His disciples, or suffer in the attempt to punish the wicked for their sin, and who point out that the Cross is the Just dying for the unjust, the Innocent taking upon Himself the penalty due to the wicked, the Strong daring to put Himself unarmed at the mercy of His foes, confident in the power of the Spirit alone; then it is declared that, while this is God's supreme method, He obviously has other ways, which are exemplified in the processes of nature, human history, and a tormenting hell for the disobedient. Beside the New Testament there is the Old, and the Old is not really abrogated. First the law, then grace. Forgiveness comes only after the discipline of punishment, and since nationally we are still at the semi-Christian stage, these are the only methods that it is open for us to employ. All talk of a

martyr nation is not only a dangerous application to the national sphere of what is entirely spiritual and personal, but it is probably blasphemous to think that a nation could ever imitate the sinless Son of God.

But the force and fury of all this attempt to dispose of the pacifist interpretation of the New Testament has been a trifle overdone. When we have time to settle down again it will become clear that in this controversy Jesus Christ has been deprived of almost all significance and value for this world. His claim of all power and authority, and the apostolic faith in His historical and cosmical significance, have been implicitly abandoned. And what is left? Why, just as much place as the German State theologian is willing to give to Him: a mystic companionship, an inner shrine; while externally life is organised and politics are conducted on entirely different principles. Indeed, the constant supply of articles and books which is being brought up to bombard the pacifist position is itself a confession of a strength in that position which the pacifists themselves never dreamed of. They are only the most insignificant minority; they do not number amongst them a single leader of opinion; most of them are tarred with impossible heresies, they are recruited from the most diluted type of Christianity, are chiefly cranks, and many are frankly atheist. On the other hand, the

Churches in these islands have never been so united on any subject since the Reformation. The apologists for the Christian sanction for war are only giving these foolish ideas a further advertisement. They must know that controversy often has an effect the very reverse of what was intended. One would think that the British nation was in danger of embarking upon some quixotic and fanatical adventure, or that the Army was on the point of revolt, or that the Churches were being undermined with sedition. On the contrary, battle flags are grouped round the crucifix, used as a background for altars and to protect the Blessed Sacrament. There is hardly a Nonconformist service or meeting at which the National Anthem is not a recognised part of the proceedings. What turn of opinion are they striving to prevent? Whom are they trying to persuade? It looks almost as if they were not sure of themselves.

But what will be the effect of this controversy on the after-war judgment? It will be seen that Christianity is capable of a dangerous interpretation. The boasted bulwark of Protestantism, the unexpurgated and unexplained Bible, will be revealed to be just what the Catholics have always contended, a dangerous Book; only now it is not the Old Testament morality, the Cursing Psalms and the militancy of the Apocalypse that have to be explained for the benefit of the ignorant and literal-

istic, but the higher ideals, the ethics of the Cross that must be explained away. Your militarist will remember that the Bible is a national danger in war-time. He will tolerate no religion in these islands that might at a crisis endanger the national cause. For it must be remembered that there are also those who do agree with the pacifist interpretation of Christianity, who do believe that Jesus taught all these dangerous attitudes of life, but who believe that this is the utopian ideal of a deluded visionary, or a scheme of life that is absolutely impossible. Every effort must be made to overwhelm this dangerous nonsense. Robert Blatchford and Horatio Bottomley hold different opinions as to the value of the Christian religion, but their conclusions as to the idiocy of pacifism are identical. On the other hand, there are those who, long before this war came, saw that the Bible as a whole, and the prevailing interpretation of Christianity in particular, was the greatest support of militarism. They will be able to persuade many after this that Christianity is the enemy and the Churches the great hindrance to the progress and enlightenment of the race.

Much will immediately depend upon the actual results of the war. But suppose that there is no overwhelming victory, no dictated peace, no Germany crushed beyond all fear of rising again; it will be quite useless to go on with Christianity,

because we have been told over and over again that if we do not win, and win overwhelmingly, Christianity itself is doomed. Or it may be that, even with great victory, the peace that is dictated will be such that vast preparations will have to be undertaken to guard us from the new wars that the settlement will engender, and all the ideals for which life was given so willingly, to make this a war to end war, prove delusions. Or a wiser and sadder Europe, with all the facts free to be considered, may discern that the war was a tragic mistake, due to the machinations of a few fire-eaters and the irresponsibility of the Press in every country; that at any time it could have been prevented, and even when it had broken out brought to a conclusion, if only the right word had been spoken, if only the truth had been allowed to be published. Then, with all the broken and maimed men about us, with hearts that will find little comfort then in the thought of a holy war, it will be seen that Christianity is one of the greatest international dangers. It will be recalled that Christianity has blessed and discovered sanctions for every war that Christian nations have ever waged, and it will be recognised that this war was fundamentally no different from the rest. Christianity will therefore stand forth as a system of thought which blinds the mind, intensifies hate, pours oil on a conflagration, provides beautiful ideals to lure whole peoples to destruction.

The ark of God has been sent to the battle. It may never come back or be mentioned again; or if it returns, the people may destroy what they have discovered to be a false and idolatrous Palladium. Christianity will be condemned as impossible in peace and dangerous in war.

What we are almost certain to see attempted is a religion of sublimated patriotism. That is obviously the religion that works and one that we can rely upon in times of national danger. These questionings and conflicts which have hindered efficiency would then be done away with. We can see that in France patriotism has been sufficient. There has been no need there to drag in Christ or the Cross. The State must therefore clothe itself with the repudiated divinity of the Church. Or if it may not be safe to call the State a divine institution, as encouraging dependence on divine favour and protection, it must be regarded as the supreme human institution, able to command and to absolve from all personal responsibility or ethical scruples in carrying out that command. The State takes the place of the Church. It is actually being proposed that there should be for all young citizens an equivalent for the Confirmation ceremony, in which the State should be accepted and fealty sworn.[1] This will put an end to all theological squabbles and conflicting loyalties, and at the same time give

[1] Syllabus of Fabian Lecture by Mrs. Sidney Webb, Nov. 24th, 1916.

definiteness to one's worship and objectivity to one's devotion. Not Humanity this time, but England and the Empire shall be the highest symbol of religion, and "dulce et decorum pro patria mori" will suffice to sanction the supreme sacrifice.

If England is going to carry the burden of world Empire, and be the self-constituted guardian of the world's peace, then we must have our children trained up in this idea. The Empire must be the supreme end of their lives. For not without a great idealism can the practical effort, the military preparation, the educational inspiration be sustained. On every side we are seeing an attempt to make this the real religion of the schools and the basis for the ethical education of the young. And it will be popular after the war, unless we have a tremendous reaction of opinion. It will be little use to point out that it is just this which has turned Germany into a deified State, made her the anarchist in the European brotherhood, given her a diabolical will to war. For a time the attempt will be made to provide a complete Christian sanction for this supremacy of the State and the task of Empire. It will be said that God has called us to it. There might be a possibility of using that ideal to educate the nation to trust to His protection alone. But while the Church will be busy providing sanctions, the real driving force will be entirely secular, and in time the Church patronage

will be no longer needed and the Christian sanction openly disavowed. The State has always used religion for its own purposes, and then declared war on it when it wanted it no longer.

Those who have seen these issues and are prepared to withstand them at any cost are fighting for the old battle of the martyrs over again; as that battle obviously had to be fought over again, seeing that Constantine's act or the Church's acceptance really forfeited everything they had died for. It will be objected that the sufferings of pacifists are too ridiculously unlike to be compared. If some people had their way they would not be, and they may come to imitate them too closely before the day is won. Or it will be said that the martyrs had a clear issue about which there was no possible confusion like that which obtains now. It was a case of whether they would worship the Emperor; and this was obviously impossible. But surely it was not really so simple as that. The Emperors did not want to be worshipped. They only wanted to give a concrete form to loyalty to the Empire. What they objected to about Christians was not their obstinate refusal to sprinkle a few grains of incense on the altar before the Emperor's statue, for they allowed Jews to be exempted from that; it was that Christians professed to have another King and to believe in another Empire altogether. Moreover, there were many of the early Christians

who apparently found it possible to sacrifice, not only in sheer cowardice or betrayal, but no doubt because they argued themselves into believing that it was only a meaningless ceremony. It was only a few out-and-out persons, the extremists, then as now, who faced up to the real issue, whether they could see all that they were fighting against or not; it was Christ's Kingdom against the deified State that was in contest, and that is in contest still.

And yet it is likely that other forces will manifest themselves at the close of the war which will prevent this issue again being forced to such a critical decision. Modern patriotism is strong enough when danger threatens; it is likely to go to pieces the moment the danger is removed. If the end of the war should therefore bring about any cessation of the European menace, this new religious patriotism will be deprived of any suitable stimulant. Moreover, if after the war there should be a great revulsion from the policy which led up to it, then patriotism will be at a discount for some time to come. The State will be identified with the Government, and the Government will be anything but worshipped. Therefore it depends on whether we have to face a further menace of danger after the war. If we do, the Churches will have to decide whether they are going to cut out a path for themselves and resist the popular tendency, or whether, having learned nothing, they will throw

themselves into the one task of national defence. In either issue, humanly speaking, it will go hard with Christianity. To attempt to stand across the path of national safety, after what has happened, will almost certainly entail national rejection of Christianity and the suppression of the Church; while to side with the new national tendency will bring about in time the entire disappearance of Christianity as a distinctive religion. It will serve, as in Germany, simply as a convenient support to the State, while all along the revolutionary element, which will perforce be secularistic and anti-Christian, will be increasing in strength.

And yet Christianity will survive; if not as a force which has its centre in Western Europe, yet it may be transplanted to a virgin soil and be accepted by some more adventurous people. The rejection of Christianity by Western Europe would not necessarily see the last of Christianity, for with that rejection it would not be long before European civilisation perished as completely as some of its predecessors. The great lesson would have been learned, the new nations would know that Christianity was not only essential to human life, but they would also see that the compromised Christianity of European industrial and military civilisation was a useless danger. It is true that as a social and international ethic Christianity has not yet been tried. But it is the only way of progress

that still stands open. Therefore its great unfulfilled ideal will remain to lead some more consistent and simple-minded people into the Promised Land. On the whole, it should not be surprising that Christianity has taken all these centuries to understand and to approach, if it is indeed the final faith and destiny of the human race. Its rejection by Europe might be only the way to secure its fuller adoption by some other people. We have no need whatever to give up hope of Christianity, for there is hope nowhere else; and it is as yet much too soon to give up hope of Europe coming to realise that, when she wakes from her fever and recovers from her present madness.

III

WHAT TYPE OF CHRISTIANITY WILL PERSIST?

Pre-war Christianity may be fairly described as all sixes and sevens. Not only was there a tangled and many-coloured fringe concerning which no one could be sure whether it was to be classed as Christianity or not, but even in the centre, where the faith was confessed and stoutly fought for, the fighting was chiefly amongst ourselves. The Church presented the appearance of a disorderly rabble, without leaders and without objective, cries clamouring for direction answered by voices as varied and futile; not at all as our favourite hymn describes us:

> "Like a mighty army
> Moves the Church of God,"

but something much more like a football scrimmage. In the "free" Churches this was not counted such a disgrace; indeed, was sometimes defended as salutary, of the very genius of our faith; for anything could be tolerated save uniformity. But in the "catholic" Churches, where this sort of thing was most to be deplored, it also most

obviously existed. The recriminations of the contending factions in the Church of England, for instance, often assumed a character which would be more pardonable if two opposing religions were in controversy; while the mutual attitude of Nonconformists and Anglicans was, in all charity, far removed from anything that might be expected to characterise two regiments fighting on the same side and for the same object. If there were signs of a more blessed toleration stealing over the field of Christendom, it was due rather to a weariness of the fray, to a fading of conviction, and, above all, to the general feeling that none of us quite knew where we were. One of the most widely read and discussed books of the times had for its title "What is Christianity?" The very fundamentals were in question, not only in Theology, but in Ethics. There seemed to be no guidance left in the Christian faith as to what we ought to believe or how we ought to act. Those who maintained a passionate attachment to the faith did so from intellectual or devotional necessity; but in neither case did they seem able to show what it meant for the living of life. That was left to be decided by politics or economics. Unless Church funds were in question, or denominational prestige in danger of suffering some slight, no decision on any vital concern could be reached in any Church assembly, except it could be made of such a colourless character or plati-

tudinarian nature that everyone could vote for it because it really committed one to nothing whatever.

So far as it is possible to distinguish types of thought in this welter of opinion, we may say that there were, roughly, two main divisions: orthodox and liberal. The orthodox were divided into catholic and evangelical: those whose standard of orthodoxy was Church teaching, and those whose standard was the Bible. The orthodox of both branches were largely opposed to reform of any kind in Church, Society or theology. Either, in the case of the catholics, they were constitutionally opposed to it, or, in the case of the evangelicals, they were sure that reform ought to be postponed until everyone had been converted; when presumably no reform would be needed.

The liberals embraced all those who were convinced that Christianity must be reconciled to the demands of the modern mind, to which the old formulas were either meaningless or impossible. But here also two very different schools can be discerned, namely, those who were inclined to make the modern mind the standard to which everything in Christianity must be reduced, and those who felt that Christianity was the real standard which only needed to be reinterpreted in order for the modern mind to embrace it with enthusiasm. In the former case the supernatural element had to be entirely

eliminated. There was only one sphere of reality, that which was now determined by science. Jesus Christ was simply a human being, one of the race, coming into the world, as we all do, by the sole will of His parents. His Cross was not the means of salvation; that has to be wrought out by each man for himself in terms of character. The Church was not only an effete institution, but perverted in its essential idea. What is perhaps most wonderful about this reinterpretation is that it should maintain that all that Christianity had ever done for men could be set forth within this scheme; indeed, its inner life was to be saved for the modern world by tearing off these external husks.

The other type of liberalism endeavoured to keep more closely to the great ideas of Christian doctrine, giving them, however, a more universal interpretation. God, the Being worshipped by Christians, really existed, but He worked only through the scheme as fixed by natural science; though He was to be found within the heart in a way that seemed to assume that there He had a somewhat freer field. The "immanence of God" was the watchword of this school. Divinity was conceded to Christ because it could be conceded to all men, at least potentially. Christ was the measure of what man could be, the highest manifestation of the Godhead immanent in humanity. The Cross was the way of salvation, but it operated only in those

who themselves took up their cross. The true idea of the Church was held to be better embodied in the notion of the Kingdom of God, which consisted in improved social relationships; those who had seen it from afar and were working towards it being the members of the Kingdom. This type of thought was bound to be a trifle vague, but it had the advantage, common to all mists, of being able to spread itself over a large area. It could touch the more definite orthodoxy on one side, and it was also able to embrace the more extreme and negative liberalism.

It must be carefully remembered that these divisions are only to be taken as convenient generalisations. The areas thus defined were broken up by cross divisions, by strange filiations, and by personalities who somehow managed to combine what seemed natural opposites. Anglo-Catholics could be named who professed a Socialism that would satisfy the most rigorous tests. There was growing up a "high-broad" school in Anglicanism, an "evangelical-sacramental" school in Nonconformity, while among Quakers and Plymouth Brethren there might be found a fairly "high church" doctrine. A general awakening to the Social Problem as the greatest challenge to the Christian faith, and the need of a different social order as one of its essential embodiments, was making itself manifest not only in forcing members

of churches to face and study the facts, but actually holding out the promise that the approach to unity, which seemed so closed ecclesiastically, might be found in this direction. But the movement could hardly claim to be really representative, and it was inclined to end with study, or to give tentative backing to social proposals which among socialists themselves were already going out of fashion.

And down upon this hopeless confusion there crashed the catastrophe of the war. Our task is to try to estimate what effect it will have upon the pre-existing chaos. It can hardly make the confusion worse. It may be that this baptism of fire and hammering of awful facts will eventually fuse and fashion our fragmentary Christianity into an instrument more fit for fighting its foes and for getting work accomplished. But all hope of a swift and sudden process must now be abandoned. It may be that underneath the suppression of individual thought which the war has occasioned there may be going on a making-up of the mind which will display itself after the war in mass convictions; that the marking time, which is the order of the day for all enterprises, will have stored up an impulse which will manifest itself in very rapid movement the moment the order is given to march. On the other hand, it may be that the present development of the civilised mind has passed for ever beyond the possibility of corporate thought

and concerted action. That mass convictions rule in war-time may only make them more suspect afterwards; for the sort of corporate thought and concerted action prevalent in war-time is indisputably a reaction to a lower level. It has meant everywhere the sterilising of intellect and the suppression of the moral consciousness. It is for much more subtle indications that we must search, at any rate for the present.

One can detect that theological liberalism may suffer in popularity because of its German origins. "Made in Germany" has always been a useful sneer for certain audiences when critical conclusions had to be discredited. It is a device which even well-informed and much-indebted scholars have now shown themselves not unwilling to use. Since the German theology known in this country is nearly all of the advanced order, it must be that which is responsible for the collapse of moral judgment in Germany; the meticulous scholarship for which she is so famous must be the cause of that incapability of reading the psychology of the situation which governed Germany's plunge into war, and seems to have dictated her whole policy ever since. It must be the rationalising element in her theology that has produced the extraordinary lack of humour which alone can explain her conviction that the war was forced upon her, and that she is waging it on behalf of civilisation. A great deal of this is

grossly unfair. It seems not to be known in this country that some German theologians, and most German pastors, are very orthodox; but it is only the unorthodox theologians that can secure translation into English. If liberalism is the cause of Germany's fall, then some of our liberals ought to recant or to go into exile for not recognising before the connection which now they announce so guilelessly. It may well be that there is some rational connection between German liberalism and the idea that State ethics are beyond the range of religion; but it is questionable if it is yet understood what the connection is; and very similar ideas are discoverable in the works of both liberal and orthodox theologians here at home.[1] It is, unfortunately, one of the general agreements of modern theology, that the teaching of Jesus has no reference to the State. Still, we are considering what effects are likely, not what ought to be; and if it can be shown that a liberal idea first occurred to a German, it will not secure its welcome by our Christian public for some time to come.

It is likely that a more definitely religious impulse will operate to send us all back to the more central concerns of the faith, even if only with more passionate questions on our lips. Is there a God? Can Jesus Christ help our world to-day?

[1] Cp. Forrest's "Authority of Christ," and Peile's "Reproach of the Gospel."

Is there another life beyond this? Does prayer make any difference? What did Jesus do on the cross, and how does it save me here? Ought there to be any difference between the Church and the world? It is to these critical issues that all our thought is bound to be driven, for these are the things about which we really must be sure. Faith is backing to its citadel. This is not to be gathered, it must be admitted, from the correspondence appearing in our religious newspapers, which is more circumferential and trivial now than ever. But that is because the central facts are raising issues that few of us dare face, fewer feel able to speak about, and fewer still assume the responsibility for openly discussing. Never was expressed opinion less guide to what is going on within. That the other movement is alive may be gathered from the questions that the soldiers always put, from the murmuring response which a daring word will unexpectedly evoke, and especially by the quickening of that movement which had begun before the war, where among the intellectuals and the advanced there was beginning a reconsideration and rediscovery of the fundamental truths of the Christian position.

What some will call a revival of "superstition," and others will call a manifestation of religious devotion, may be looked for, and is already manifest. The "liberals" know that we are in for a

revival of sacramentalism, prayers for the dead, the restoration of the crucifix and all the other externals of catholicism. It will be as difficult to repress as to explain this, for it is simply a dumb craving that turns to the ancient forms of expression, and is directly inspired by the horrors of the time. When evil is so visible one wants some visibility in one's religion. A purely inward worship cannot support itself against the sights and sounds of a world at war. Militarism lives by symbols, uses every external device to recruit; Christianity must copy the soldier, as it has always done. Whether this is all to be condemned as "superstition" or recognised to be natural, and already provided for in catholic customs; and whether it is to be left to superstition to exploit or given a higher meaning congruous with spiritual religion, must depend upon the sort of teaching that is forthcoming. That these customs will be revived is certain. Before we have done the crucifix may be as common in England as on the Continent. How many good Protestants must have found themselves praying for the dead, even if they never meant to, these last years! Prayer craves to hold the very feet of Christ in its agony, and unaccustomed steps may be taken to where, as in the Reserved Sacrament, Christ is held to be present in more than spiritual form.

There may be a falling back to a more definite connection with the Visible Church. The feeling

after fellowship is strong in these days. It must be difficult for anyone to go out to a game of golf on a day set apart for national intercession. Church is almost the only place where you can get communal feeling now. Many have adopted the opinions they now hold about war not, as they imagine, because of reason or religious convictions, but because they cannot bear to be out of the common stream of thought. And where this is felt the strongest the National Church must hope to gain the most; for it is the Church which, rightly or wrongly, claims to be the most identified with the history and cause of the nation. The Anglican Church knows that it has the opportunity of a century and is trying to seize it, and even a militant Nonconformist may hope that she will not fail, if it is the worldling she means to move.

But it must be understood that these are at present no more than straws on the stream, and they have to be watched very carefully to detect whether the stream is moving at all, or in which direction.

There is one unity that the war has forced upon the Church, namely, a unity of conviction that our cause is righteous, that there was nothing else to be done, and that to beat our enemy so that he can never play this game again is a task for which we can implore Divine aid. Here the Church stands beside the national conviction, ready to pledge

all her spiritual power in support. There has not been such a united church opinion for centuries. It is only natural. It is supported by the only facts most of us know, and the only facts some of us want to know; sanctified by the willingness of our youth to sacrifice themselves to the uttermost; confirmed by the enormities of the German method of making war. There may be considerable deductions to be made from the evidence when the war is over and criticism is free; when the censorship is removed and our surviving soldiers get their memories back and their uniforms off; when we once again allow ourselves to imagine what our method of war appears like to enemy lands where limbs and hearts can ache just like our own. It will be realised then that war itself punishes sufficiently without vengeful reprisals. But we shall then also discover that its worst infliction is wrought on the mind which it seals against thought, and on the heart which it steels against feeling. Yet the Church cannot be blamed. She has done the natural thing. The lads having gone, not only from Music Hall and Public House, but from Choir and Bible Class, no word must be allowed that would enfeeble them in their task, and everything that can support them must be said. The Church has only been human after all. The only difficulty is that the Church is supposed to be a supernatural institution and a divine Society, and we know that she has often

been at her best when she has faced the world alone. To find ourselves in such perfect agreement with the world is rather disconcerting. And with it all there is the fact that although we have placed everything at the world's disposal, our sanctions, our assurances, our spiritual power, the world does not care whether we do or not, has never thanked us and is never likely to. The work of the churches, in so far as it has materialised in collections, in the help given to the soldiers by the Y.M.C.A., the Church Army, or the Salvation Army, is acknowledged and appreciated. But nothing is said about the spiritual support given to the national cause; no word of relief that the Church has not questioned or withstood or discouraged the war; no recognition of the prayers, the sermons, the books put forth in such abundance.

Is it that the world knows it can always reckon on church support for this sort of thing, and therefore took it for granted? Is it that the world places no real value upon the spiritual support we have given? It is a disquieting silence, and when we have time to notice it there will be a lot of thinking to be done.

But here is the unity of the Church at last attained. Archdeacon Wilberforce and Father Bernard Vaughan agree that in this present issue the killing of Germans is not only not to be questioned or deplored; it is doing God service. Dr.

Forsyth and Mr. Campbell may not agree at all in their interpretation of Christianity, but they do agree that Christ is an encouragement to a war like this. It is true to His spirit, His teaching, His temper, His cross. *The Church Times* and *The Christian World, The British Weekly* and *The Universe,* are for once in absolute agreement. The only quarrel that disturbs the serenity of the relationships between Anglicans and Nonconformists now arises out of any suggestion that the Church has sent more men into the army, or that Nonconformity naturally manufactures conscientious objectors. The Church stands solid. Yet there are no Te Deums for the Church at last made one.

But it is felt to be not enough for the Church to side with the nation. There must be some means of showing that one's principles, and not mere expediency or circumstances, commit one to the position that is taken up. And then it is that the old differences begin to show themselves and the old confusions re-emerge. For it is difficult to believe that principles so absolutely opposed should naturally lead to the same conclusion. And in the effort to get back to something solid as a sure ground of support it is gradually being revealed that some principles are more easily applicable to the support of war than others.

An unquestioning orthodoxy is perhaps the best support for war; because one can either fall back

upon Catholic teaching, which has never regarded a defensive war as other than justifiable; or there is the Thirty-seventh Article, which settles the matter for Anglicans, that at the command of the magistrate it is lawful to wear weapons and serve in the wars;[1] and for those who take the Bible as inspired equally all through, there are the magnificent examples and encouragements of the Old Testament which provide sanctions up to the complete extermination of women and children.

Yet, even where external authority is accepted, there is generally a disposition to show that it agrees with reason and conscience, and so these canons are by themselves felt to be insufficient for any but the intellectually servile, and then even the literalist finds himself in some doubt the moment he begins to inquire for himself. There are other commands in the Bible besides those to exterminate the enemies of the Lord; exhortations to feed, to forgive, to love your enemies; which seem to run counter to anything that war strategy allows. Plymouth Brethren, who have always stood aloof from politics as no concern of the Christian, find themselves unmoved by the political arguments which are sufficient for some Free Churchmen, and very doubtful whether these worldly means are lawful for a Christian. Christadelphians, Millennial Dawnists, and others of similar views see in the

[1] Presumably any war that happens to be going.

present catastrophe the final judgment or some herald of it; and they do not feel called upon to take any part in inflicting a judgment from which they look to be saved. The Roman Catholic finds the war a matter of deep distress, because he belongs to an international Church, and there are Germans and Austrians who believe exactly what he believes, who pray the same prayers and offer the same sacrifice in the same tongue; and although he has been taught to acknowledge that in these matters he has to follow the command of his secular superiors who wield God's judging sword, there is the Pope giving voice to quite different sentiments,[1] which, if they do not hinder a loyal Roman Catholic from becoming a soldier, make prayer seem more important, and these pathetic appeals from Christ's Vicar cannot but stir strange thoughts. In some countries the Pope's appeals have been practically suppressed, and in others have had to be farced with explanatory statements in order to bring them into line with national sentiment. "National" Churches are freed from these distressing considerations.

Thus the broader type of Evangelical finds that some of his principles seem to need a certain adjustment if they are going to be made to support war. There is the question of the Cross, to him the only means of salvation. Did not God here punish the innocent in place of the guilty? Did He

[1] "The Pope on War and Peace." Burns and Oates.

not take man's sins upon Himself rather than exact their just penalty? He may comfort himself that the two theologians in this country who have made the subject of the Cross their special concern, Principal Forsyth and Principal Denney, are one in holding that the Cross is the supreme sanction of such a war as this. The Cross shows that God will not forgive unless someone is first slain. The Cross is a manifestation of the holy justice of God. "It is the salvation of righteousness in blood."[1] This sounds a little hard, and it is difficult to see how it sanctions those who were the enemies of God and have been forgiven because someone else died for them setting forth to slay *their* enemies. The world has to be redeemed by blood, sin can be washed out in no other way. But by whose blood? Still, here are those who have devoted a lifetime to the study of the Cross. They must know, and they are absolutely sure. It is a little more difficult for the Evangelical to surrender to the popular notion that because a man gives up his life for his country and dies on the field of battle he has a claim above others on the mercy of God. That seems to cut away the idea that salvation is not by works, but by faith in Christ alone. Moreover, does it apply to Germans or Turks? If one shrinks from this because of the dangerous extensions of the doctrine that seem unavoidable, then there is the idea of

[1] Cp. Dr. Forsyth's "Christian Ethic of War."

Purgatory to be looked at. It has a bad origin, but it embodies the convenient notion that the soul, not quite ready for the sight of God, may be purified and made ready beyond this life. That Purgatory is in the Catholic scheme only intended for the faithful is apparently overlooked in some of its hasty Protestant adaptations. Evangelicalism has been hard hit in the war; how hard we shall not know till we have time to take stock.

But it is liberalism which seems to leave most room for the sanction of a war ethic. In Anglicanism the Broad Church tendency to Erastianism demands that the Church must meekly submit to the dictates of State necessity and provide them with appropriate theological sanctions. To advanced Nonconformity the Church is nothing more than a human institution of quite temporary significance. It possesses no corporate illumination greater than that of any other assembly of human beings—no greater than Parliament, for instance. It does not hold the keys of the Kingdom in its priestly hands. It must conform to the ordinary laws of human association by which the law of the average and the pace of the slowest must guide all action. Therefore the Church cannot expect to exert any special power at a time like this. If politicians say there is only one way, it is not for the Church to question it. If the minds of the masses are locked to a certain purpose, however false, the Church is not

called upon to exercise any peculiar powers to undermine their resolution or endanger her existence by any melodramatic interference. The Church can only move when the people move. She has no duty to call people beyond their powers of reach.

The idea that the whole scheme of human history can be explained by evolution, interpreted as an inevitably microscopical advance, within which even God Himself is confined, is a great help when the dilemma is discerned between the world's way of redemption by war for righteousness, and Christ's way of setting forth the righteousness which dies for your enemies. The world can only move towards Christ's higher ideal gradually. Anything like an attempt to force the pace will only put things back or wreck itself upon vain hopes. God moves not only by means of Christ's method, but also through the slow discipline of history. If people cannot see Christ's way, or follow it, they must learn by the other way, and it is not for the Church to condemn the world which is doing the best it knows; it must actually support the world in its second best. That Jesus died just because He did things before the world was ready to follow Him, and by this brought the Kingdom of God near to man, and that every movement in history has been effected not by slow, inevitable pressure, but by those who have been willing to die for the thing that seemed far off, does not seem to make any

impression on those who use these arguments. The very capacity to imagine anything different, or to adventure towards a great ideal, has been destroyed by the paralysing notion that all advance must be gradual and completely internal. This type of mind is enslaved to a naturalistic Erastianism.

The greatest of all defences for war can be found in the liberal estimate of the Person of Jesus. Jesus must not be in any sense identified with God. Alongside Jesus there is the Infinite and Mighty, of which Jesus is only a very diminished image or specialised revelation. It was all Jesus could do to die; but with the Almighty Father there are other ways. If Jesus may be regarded in some sense as an incarnation of God, it must be only of a part of God, His compassionate and forgiving side. The world was made and is governed by force, not by love, and it is this that God must still employ upon those who are incapable of responding to love. If liberalism is willing to allow more deity to Jesus, still He is God only in a state of humiliation. We must think of Him as raised to another type of existence by the resurrection, clothed again with the power of might and the authority of an indisputable will. It is this Christ who is now acting with the awful powers of Deity. Or, more commonly, liberalism contents itself with restricting the area of Christ's authority. Jesus only concerns Himself with one side of life, the

inner and personal. He says nothing about the State, war, social evils, economic problems. He ministers consolations to the soul. He sets before us a liberating ideal; but externally life has to be lived by other principles where His authority does not count. Jesus reveals what God is in His private capacity; but God has also to act in a public capacity, when there are other things to be considered.

It is obvious that alongside the liberal Jesus there is room for another deity, the God of the State, the God of this world. But it is also obvious that in this duality the Christian faith has been completely surrendered. All that the Church fought for at Nicea, the confession that in Jesus Christ we knew the Eternal God to the very substance of His nature, is abandoned. We are left absolutely without guidance, and it can be seen that Jesus is a person who must be politely bowed out whenever public business has to be discussed.

Popular liberalism, for all its pride in its modernity, is always behind the times; sweating to fit the Christian religion into a mechanical evolutionary scheme, only to wake up when its task is done to find that science has now abandoned the mechanical scheme as no true representation at all; drawing a picture of a meek and lowly Jesus who would not dare to interefere with world conditions, just as the Gospels are discovered to be aflame with an apocalyptic Figure who professes to

hold all history in His hand, to precipitate judgments on the world when His Church goes to sleep, and to be the Author, not the subject, of all the crises that come upon mankind.

Now it may be fair to say that this liberalism has in Germany sanctioned the erection of another altar to the worship of the God of State Necessity; whence might is right, and the preservation of the State becomes the sole guide of all politics. And in this country it is here and there discerned that this is the enemy that we have to fight. But if this doctrine has found a ruthless and efficient embodiment in Prussia, it is, nevertheless, the tendency at least of all modern Statecraft whatsoever, which is now conducted on a thoroughly secular basis. And if the war can be used to waken the world to see that this is in complete opposition to the faith which claims that Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords, the Ruler of all kingdoms, the Judge of nations; and that the way of war, with its sabre-rattling preparations and its mailed fist policies, is the complete antithesis to the way of the Cross; is it open to us, who have to use the same means, to claim that we are fighting for the complete identity of Christ and the Godhead,[1] that we are fighting for the Pierced Hand as against the mailed fist? We may claim that we are fighting for these things, though it would come as a

[1] "Ancestral Voices," p. 14. Dr. J. A. Hutton.

perplexing revelation to many of the fighting units; but it is doubtful if these methods will spread the Nicene faith among the rationalists of Germany; and how would it be a victory for faith unless the enemy accepted the faith? We may be fighting *for* the Cross, but can we claim that we are fighting *with* the Cross, that the Cross is the weapon with which we fight?

We are back at the old confusions. Those who stand for the dogmatic faith seem no more able than others who deny it to see to what that faith commits them, and in the crisis they stand side by side with the liberals whom they charge with having surrendered it. This agreement between avowed enemies must make those who are seeking a full presentation of the Christian faith see that neither orthodoxy nor liberalism is going to help them much further on. If this coalition religion succeeds it means the obscuration of Christianity under forms for which men are willing to die, but by which they are unable to live, and the approximation in practice to a liberalism which is guided throughout by a timid, official, professorial view of Christianity, without adventure or imagination, or if any more illuminated, then so timid that it believes only in leavening the lump and at the same time doing everything to prevent it rising: a very nice classroom, sacristy, and devotional religion, but one which has no application to history or the world; a religion

which believes in an Incarnation only for the purposes of theological discussion, or a religion which must never become incarnate at all.

If there is discontent with this, and there is anywhere a determination that Christianity shall not be surrendered, we must look for a new grouping, the formation of an opposition out of hitherto disconnected elements. One can dimly see what elements might unite to resist this thoroughly paralysing compromise. There would have to be the apocalyptic interpretation of Jesus blended with an unbending Nicene Christology; a combination of evangelic faith in redemption by the Cross alone, coupled with a Catholic conception of the Church as the Divine Body which is to live as well as preach the Cross. This might give us a whole Christianity knit together at last, an instrument for God's redemption of the world. What is discredited in this crisis is a reduced and souvenir Christianity. What stands out untried, almost unrealised as yet, is Christianity as a living whole, a Christianity as great, as simple and as unified as Christ.

II.—THE CRY OF THE TIMES

I

THE DEMAND FOR REALITY

We have suggested that the only Christianity that has promise for the coming days is one that might be obtained by cross-breeding from those strains which have hitherto drifted apart, one that might be formed by the fusing of elements that have hitherto never been combined. The analogies suggested are worth consideration, for they hold good for more than passing illustrations. Christianity has not only been fatally fissiparous, but the isolated growth along different lines reproduces both the narrowness of uncriticised and unbalanced sectarianism and also the fatal weakness of in-breeding, so that even what may be good in a denominational difference comes to be held as a mere tradition. The constituent elements of Christianity have been analysed out, and each set to do the work of attacking some hardness or corruption which will yield only to the compound. Every type of Christianity is failing to-day just because it is a type. The excellences of each are negatived by its partial and uncorrected witness. But even if we could agree upon the elements which especially need to

be brought into intimate contact, it would still be unlikely that we could agree how this ought to be accomplished. Everyone who desires a reunion of the Christian forces, whether a synthesis of the opposing schools of thought or the union of ecclesiastical denominations, must soon conclude that it can only be brought about by some catastrophe that will fling them violently together, or some great internal fire that will fuse them to one tough and tempered metal.

The external catastrophe of the war has not accomplished this, and at present there is little internal warmth which might be converted into the veritable blast furnace that would be needed to melt some of the elements that have to be fused together. Here at home there is no great religious fervour; there is not even any great religious concern. The salutary if inoperative criticism of past years has been suspended, and the one duty sufficiently absorbing seems to be that of "carrying on." Nothing is to be expected of the home churches just now. How could there be with their most vigorous men absorbed by the army and the women engaged in a thousand and one tasks of help, worn by grief at irreparable loss or by even more exhausting anxiety? The war absorbs all activity and thought. To say that there are things more important than the war may be a truism, but it also happens to be treason, if it is really meant.

Yet no external necessity has the power to repress religious concern if it once gets started, and there must be some reason deeper than the external fact of war which is depressing religion in the nation.

There is no doubt that, however justified it may be, the conviction of the complete righteousness of our cause is not an aid to religion. There is no inherent necessity why our being in the right should prohibit the true religious attitude; it ought to call forth deep thankfulness that God should have enabled us to keep our hands clean; it ought to give us a good conscience toward God that would be a tremendous asset in the struggle. But this righteousness is, unfortunately, too like the brand that the Gospel has taught us to diagnose as the most withering disease that can ever take hold upon man, namely, that of self-righteousness. It has to be remembered that the number of definitely religious people in these islands is now a very small proportion, and while the righteousness of the nation in this crisis will be traced by them to the grace of God, the great majority would utterly fail to appreciate a righteousness that was dependent upon anything outside themselves. One only needs to see this righteousness on purely ethical grounds carried out on to the national plane to understand how sound the religious suspicion of this variety has been. It is bound to measure itself, not by some ideal standard, but by comparison with the enemy.

We see them only externally, ourselves only as we appear to ourselves; and some conception of the possible perversion of vision this may produce may be gathered from the fact that the enemy thinks of himself as we do of ourselves, is just as confident of the righteousness of his cause, and thinks us to be what we think them: self-deceived, blinded hypocrites. It would still be possible for a whole-hearted conviction of righteousness to be held with some sort of religious sanction; for it is perfectly possible that there may be situations in which the right is on one side and the wrong on the other; and this may be one of them. But the religious man would still think of what he owed to the grace of God, and he would take care to examine what had contributed to another's fall, and take heed lest he fell in like manner. But with a righteousness which is attributed to oneself, the judgment is bound to be adopted that we are righteous because we are British, because that is our nature and character; the Germans are unrighteous because they are German, because it is their nature. This is how the majority of people obviously think. Anything more utterly hardening of the moral consciousness cannot be imagined. We can see now what a purely ethical system would do for humanity. Wherever two nations come to a misunderstanding that issues in war they are bound to go on to absolute extermination. A non-religious ethicism would

be the most fatal cul-de-sac into which humanity could ever be led.

It would still be open for religious people, convinced of the overwhelming justice of their cause, to find themselves pulled up by the consideration whether one had the right to cast the first stone unless one was sinless; and there are things in our past history that at least might somewhat extenuate the German fall. Germany is not the first country that has believed herself called of God to rule the world for its good. The question might be raised whether, even if the cause is righteous, this way of war is sufficiently righteous for such a cause. But that seems to be settled by the conviction that there is nothing wrong in taking a man's life as a preventive against his taking your own or someone else's, and even if it were doubted whether this was the best way there is the conviction that at present no other way is open to humanity. And there the matter is closed. No one seems to remember that war does not kill people in the way we think we have the right to kill them when they have committed some crime like murder: namely, by a quick, certain and painless death; for war tortures, maims, blinds, drives mad. It would be a simpler ethical problem if war was equivalent to execution. It is not. There are none of the safeguards of legal justice, such as professional judge, the common jury, and, above all, no counsel for

the defence is allowed; the wrong person may get executed, generally does, and he may get only half executed after all. And no one seems to inquire how, under the present supports and arguments, war is ever going to be stopped, for we have at least advanced so far that the great majority of people believe it ought to be stopped.

But even in the present acceptation of war religious people might still feel that no war could be won save in dependence upon the help and approval of God. There ought to be constant prayer for victory, constant prayer that we should not become like the enemy. It has been found quite impossible to work up this kind of prayer at all. There is first the inevitable judgment that what counts far more than prayer in a material struggle is material resources, preponderance of munitions and superiority in gun efficiency. Once the doctrine is accepted that when evil manifests itself in the form of force nothing but force is available; then spiritual forces have to be discounted or rated very low. But even if prayer could be insisted on as a force that acted somehow beyond our understanding, it is found very difficult to pray for victory in any detail or with imagination; difficult to pray that our guns may be better aimed and do more damage than the enemy's, that our diplomacy may win over some reluctant nation to come out on our side. It is no use; we have at least got beyond using prayer

for such purposes. Here are the causes for the deadness of religion amongst us. There were times when religion and war could go together. Those times have gone for ever, and it is useless to blind ourselves to the fact.

There are few who will be able to gauge the moral deterioration that follows upon such conditions. It is in the interests of those who believe that war is right, and this war religious, to show that no such deterioration has taken place. But can anyone doubt that there has been a great relaxation of moral restraint, the evidence for which is patent in the more unblushing flaunting of temptation on our streets, in the music halls, and in the lewd papers of the baser sort? But the most pious people now express themselves in sentiments that would have been unthinkable a few years ago, the Press prints stories that it would previously have refused, there is an absolute repression of all fairness and sympathy. Nothing can be more humiliating to read than the jeers and sneers that accompany any Press quotations of German opinion, itself selected only from the worst utterances that can be found; or the gloating over the evidences of suffering, anxiety or straits among the enemy. The pulpit has fallen the farthest, because higher things are expected of it; but some of its utterances can hardly be outdone by the worst type of hysterical and bloodthirsty newspaper. And yet we print

statements of what is said in German pulpits, mostly on the same principle of selecting the worst, some of which have been proved to be entire misrepresentations, and profess our amazement when similar things have been said in our own. The difference of judgment may be defended, but we wonder how the Christian pulpit is going to answer the charges that will be made after the war, when these things are collected and served up, as they will be, for purposes of infidel propaganda.

It is evident that no one can expect a religious revival in conditions like these. No one hopes for a revival at home; but there is still a hope that a religious revival will come from the trenches and be brought to us by the returning soldiers. They will bring a new life to the Churches and waken the land to its need; for we at home have not seen war; they have; and there lies our hope. This hope, expressed so confidently earlier in the war, is being considerably sobered as time wears on.

What are the prospects of a religious revival in the army? There has been the splendid response of the youth of these islands, an uprising at the call of duty which is unparalleled in history, and which has completely refuted the idea that the new generation was decadent. No sacrifice has been too costly to make. Men have shattered their life prospects, the careers for which they were preparing; they have sacrificed a future of comfort; they have

many of them reversed the convictions of a lifetime; many of them going into this thing not because they thought it right or even hoped anything from it, but because we were in it and there seemed nothing else to be done. On the top of that there has been the revelation of incredible heroism. There is nothing these men are not prepared to attempt, to risk, to endure. We have simply armies of heroes, any one of which deserves to be immortalised. Feats of bravery have taken place that wipe out the greatest stories of olden times; and they will never be remembered, simply because there are too many of them. It is not surprising that the Church has interpreted these phenomena as implicit religion. Here is the effect of Christian conviction operating underground, but at last revealing itself. The countless sermons and Bible Class instructions have not been in vain. These men have really grasped what Christianity means, and have risen to a confession of it such as we hardly hoped could have come in a day like ours. Their sacrifice baptizes them with blood into the name of Christ; their death is a fulfilment of Christ's saying: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends"; they have indeed taken up the cross and followed Christ. The great Christian hymns are sung with a new meaning: "Onward, Christian soldiers," "Fight the good fight with all thy might." The crucifix

is raised not to appeal for mercy on their souls, but as their own only adequate memorial. They are commemorated on All Saints' Day with those whom the Church has canonised: martyrs, Apostles, confessors, great adventurers for Christ.

Now no one cares to detract a word from this. One does not criticise expressions made in the hour of grief. Nothing too high can be said of what these men have done. But is this judgment accepted by the men themselves? Do they care for this description of what they have done? Has it helped the armies to keep alive their consecration, to go on to recognise the religious character of their vocation? Does it cheer them to be told that this is a holy war? It does not. It only excites bitter comment. This appraisement of the religious implication of their response is not accepted by the army as a whole.

It is obviously difficult to discover what seven million men are thinking. As well inquire what is the opinion of London. Every variety of religious and irreligious opinion can be discovered in the army, just because every variety existed before in the men who now compose it. But is there any discernible change which can be described as a movement towards religion? It is generally admitted that there is not. There are individual letters, some of them printed, which show how religion has become infinitely more real to those who have now

seen what humanity is capable of. Many who went out with religious convictions not only hold them more intensely than ever, but have resolved that on their return they will give themselves in some form or other to making religion the chief end of life and its propagation their career. In other cases reticent lads, who made no professions at home and whose case caused concern to their pious friends, now write home speaking frankly of religious matters, and giving no uncertain testimony as to what they have come to discover and hold. Over against these we have to place other letters, which will not get printed, witnessing to a burdening perplexity as to the compatibility of war with Christianity, sometimes leading to the decision that Christianity must go. Many have lost their faith, and these not only those who just accepted conventional religion, but who had taken part in Christian work, taught in Sunday Schools and so on. The reports of Chaplains give the same conflicting testimony. They know of cases of men who, face to face with death, have come face to face with God. The men ask questions which evince a desire for assurance as to whether there is a God, whether there is a life to come, how Jesus can get out of a book into a man's heart, and whether prayer has a real efficacy. There is also the discovery, which might have been made at home, that even those who register themselves as Christians show remarkably

little acquaintance with what Christianity means. A noticeable difference is said to be manifest between those who have never been in action and those who have been in the trenches. Before going into action there is a solemnity that is open to serious impression. But the presence of the Chaplain while fighting is actually going on is said to be disliked as being ominous, a reminder of the possibility of death; and when men get back, either unscathed or in hospital, everything is blotted out in the great good luck of coming through, even if minus limbs or in pain. The wonderful work of the Y.M.C.A. has perforce had to concern itself with physical comforts and recreation, and what the army would have done without this organisation one cannot imagine. The devotion of the workers, the dispatch and efficiency with which the situation has been realised and met, deserves more praise than is ever likely to be expressed. But of intimate religious work there is not in the nature of the case so much to be told. The men welcome the meetings that are held for them, and listen attentively to the addresses that are delivered by well-known evangelists. But there is no sign of a religious movement. It is difficult for those who speak to the soldiers to steer between regarding them as saints who have nothing to learn and sinners who stand in special need of conversion. More good is evidently accomplished by those

who abandon the ordinary approach to an evangelistic appeal and speak to the men along the lines of Christian evidence or Christian Missions. A distinguished Y.M.C.A. worker gives it as his opinion that along these lines a revival may yet be expected, but he adds the alarming rider that if the revival does not come now it will not come after the war, so far as the soldier is concerned.

If we turn to mass observation the situation is anything but hopeful. The profanity so common in the army is very shocking to those who are not used to it, but it probably has little significance, for it was, unfortunately, already a habit both with the working man and the university student, so that it is not surprising to find it appearing in the army. It has, however, not only increased, but, according to numerous accounts, it has degenerated into a nauseating obscenity which ought to be revolting, and the fact that it is not so is the more disquieting. One other fairly consistent report may be mentioned. There is a sort of religion very common with the Forces at the front, but it is a religion of pure fatalism, the idea that when a bullet comes over with a man's name on it, that will be his end.

There is a new movement which is beginning to manifest itself, and this may have dangerous issues. The soldiers are getting dissatisfied, "fed

up," as they would express it. This is not caused by the inevitable discomforts of army life, or by the sufferings they are called upon to face; nor perhaps by any waning belief in the righteousness of the war or any questioning of war in general; but by the doubt whether England is worth fighting for. They find on their return that the England they left behind, no doubt always idealised, and never more so than now, has sadly changed. They find the insolent and brutal opinion on top which before was decently concealed. They resent the continual invasions of civil liberty and the petty persecutions that are going on. They fear the effect of the war upon social conditions as they witness the gradual filching away of hard won liberties and the increasing power of vast employers' combines. They resent both the rosy idealism through which people at home envisage war and the insensate hate of the enemy. The soldier finds it difficult in the face of the things he has to do to idealise war at all, and he discovers that you cannot hate your enemy when you see him lying dead. And that all this should have to be borne and done in order to protect people who are frothy and futile; that men should talk as if all this sacrifice was to accomplish was to destroy competition and facilitate commercial dominion, is breeding a deep anger.[1]

[1] Cp. "Some Reflections of a Soldier." *The Nation,* October 21st, 1916.

"I'm not going to fight for a race of damned shopkeepers," is one rather illuminating if brutal remark. A man rolling up to the train for France drunk, but with some glimpse of facts and a frankness in stating them, shouts in anger: "I'm not fighting for my wife and family, I'm fighting for a lot of bloody civvies." There is a temper here which, if it should develop, will perhaps become dangerous to the situation at the front, and will certainly make our problems embittered after the war.

But it is really unfair to judge the men by what they say and do at present. To ask how opinion is tending in the army is rather like having dropped your watch into a mortar-crushing machine, wondering whether the effect will be to make the watch lose or gain. If the men come back brutalised, enslaved to vice, too stunned to think about anything, and too worn out to put their hand to the greater war that will have to follow, how could we ever expect anything else? Some will come back hopelessly perplexed, with problems to be answered, not with problems solved. Beside those who are crippled in body for the rest of their lives, there will be those who will be wounded in mind, with memories that haunt, and the Church may find that absolution after the event will not be so easy to get accepted as the indulgence she proclaimed for those who should take life under Govern-

ment orders. Many who gave themselves in fine enthusiasm will come back disillusioned, perhaps ever afterwards to be suspicious of all ideals whatsoever. It is being asked, What will they demand from the Churches? Many of them will demand nothing, because they have never expected anything from them. Others will demand nothing, because they will never darken our doors again. They will have done with us once for all. "If after this my parson says a word about forgiving enemies or any of that tosh, I will walk out of the church and never go back." We may expect something of that spirit; no more Sermon on the Mount; it does not work. Others may come back a type of pacifist this land has not yet seen, and one that it will be difficult to refuse to hear. What they will have to say about the Churches will be painful, and difficult to answer. But unless human nature is going to be altered tremendously, we may assume that the men will come back mostly as they went out, all sixes and sevens, only more so; most of them holding their pre-war opinions only more violently, a few converted to their very opposite and now determined to get those opinions adopted; namely, furious militarists and fanatical pacifists.

Facing up to a complicated situation like this is generally inhibited by the declaration that the returning army will demand from the Churches, at

least, "reality." We were never more under the dominion of catch words and phrases which refuse to yield the slightest intelligible meaning on serious analysis. And this may be one of them, for it has become as universal and wearisome as "doing your bit." It will be refreshing if the men do demand reality; it will be a revelation if they can tell us what they mean by it. But this judgment has been given by responsible persons at home, and they probably mean something by it. One can imagine that those who retain any interest in the Churches, and have been able to think during their time in the army, will demand that the Church shall once for all make up its mind about its attitude towards war. An adverse decision was gathering before the war, but a good many who were prepared to go a considerable distance in time of peace to break the delusion of war have backed considerably under the pressure of events. It is likely that there will be a demand that this line of advance shall be for ever abandoned or only be considered if one is prepared to travel its whole length. A Church that preaches one thing in peace and another in war-time will not be tolerated. "Reality" may mean *that;* but if men take different views about which course shall be adopted, the demand for reality will hardly provide us with a solution for our difficulties. It will only force upon us the dilemma of reinterpreting Christ and

His Cross in terms of "righteousness in blood," of presenting the Kingdom of Heaven as something that can be forced upon the world at the point of the sword, and of expurgating the New Testament of all that seems to suggest any other way; or, in setting out to carry pacifism to an issue as dramatic, as sacrificial, as venturesome as war has always to be. It will be a difficult situation for those of us who have confined ourselves to scholarship and preaching and are utterly unfitted for statesmanship or action; difficult for those of us who have found the compromises of ordinary life worrying and insoluble enough without having to face the tragedies which this issue seems to hold in its hands.

One can conceive an impatient demand for reality that will refuse to pay men merely to preach; that will regard all worship as so much lost time, and theology as mumbling dry bones; that will force a kind of Christian syndicalism on the Church, advocating an attack on the social problem by direct action. Certainly the demand for reality will make short work of the plea of "creating an atmosphere," praying for what you dare not lift a little finger to do yourself, discussing problems that evidently have no practical issue, since those who take the opposite positions live the same kind of lives, vote for the same man, and fight in the same last ditch; passing resolutions and leaving it

to society in general or Parliament in particular to carry them out.

The Church must prove that her theology leads to action by herself taking action, show that she has authority by exercising it, display the power of the keys by actually opening doors. She must show that worship cannot be confined to services and sacraments, but, because of these, she starts about constructing life on the basis of her belief and in the venture of her faith. The Cross must not only be preached, it must be set forth in daring the issues that upreared it; the Church living as her Lord died. Those who preach the Crucified must bear the marks of the dying of the Lord Jesus in their bodies. The Church must not only preach that we must love our enemies, but she herself must do it, beginning with denominational enemies. She must not only declare that society must be organised on the principles of Christ, she must organise her own society on those principles. All this means a religion of reality, a religion of vision, adventure and power.

It is perfectly legitimate to hope that the inspiration to a religion of this order may be provided, not by the returning armies as a whole, but by someone who has been a member of them. The task of building the earthly paradise may fall to some soul who has been scorched in this earthly hell. If God sends such a man, to whom we in

England are compelled to listen, then it is also likely that the blind longings and dumb desires that have lain dormant in the armies may find in one of their own the expression and leadership they need. Where this crusade has been joined in the hope that it was going to set Europe free from a great menace (and this *was* the hope that inspired thousands to endure so great tribulation of mind and body), the very disillusionment that the lack of political leadership seems almost certainly to threaten may prepare men for the real objective, the true holy war. Those who have kept any spark of faith to the end will not demand from others certain things to be done, but will themselves set about the work. Just as the monastic movement in its earlier and more heroic days attracted soldiers to seek in the cloister what they had failed to find on the battlefield, so the new movement, ascetic and world-denying as it will have to be, may attract the men whose ideals have been fired but left unrealised by the way of war. Those who have been willing to risk all for their country will be willing to risk no less for the kingdom of Christ. They will not be afraid of venturesome and dramatic acts; they will have escaped the dreadful timidity which has paralysed modern religion. They will not be unready to pay the price of unpopularity and endurance. Given a leader, and there will be thousands of men who will be willing to follow,

and it is not unlikely that he may be in the trenches at this present moment. But let no one suppose that he will bring a revival of the merely calefactory order, leaving us all warmed and comforted; it will be a revival of the religious life as a campaign, a battle, an adventure, not in some mystic sense, but in reality.

II

THE CHARGE AGAINST THE CHURCHES

WHAT has been happening to Churchless Christianity during the war? Even where a belief in Christianity had been sustaining itself during the great controversial period which preceded the war, it was marked by a non- and even anti-ecclesiastical character. Even with many who continued their attachment to the Church there was a feeling that the Church was not necessary to Christianity, indeed was a hindrance. It was common to meet with the declaration that there was more Christianity outside the Churches than within them. To explain the prevalence of this idea would need the gathering of considerable material and a very careful sifting of its value. But in the main two things have contributed to its existence. It is part of the natural conclusion of Protestantism. Once it is allowable to separate from the main body and make a Church of those who agree with you in protest, then there is nothing to prevent that process being carried on until the individual protests that he can get on without a Church at all. So much can be conceded to the Catholic charge that Protestantism

is a slippery slope on which there is no legitimate stopping-place short of the bottom. But there is no doubt also that the Catholic claim that there is no salvation outside the Church is the very cause of Protestantism. Human nature being what it is, any exclusive claim sets up a counter-claim, and the spirit of men will always prefer to take risks with his soul the moment he is told that he will perish if he does. These things have probably operated more subtly but more drastically than the general discontent at the action of particular Churches or particular individuals in the Churches, which one would generally find given as reasons for leaving the Church. For there would be less weight given to corporate slowness or individual bad behaviour if it was felt that, nevertheless, the Church was a necessity; there would be more patience, more attempt at reform from within. Moreover, it has got to be said very plainly that if some individuals are really in a position to condemn the Church and have proved it to be impossible, many more have been proved to be impossible by the Church. There is no greater testing place of character, especially of the disposition which is able to work with others, than the fellowship of the Church. And it may be said of many with all charity that, while we recognise their other excellences and the justice of many of their charges against the Church, they went out from us because

they were not of us. Some stones cannot possibly be builded into a Church until they have been hewed and shaped and polished somewhat. While making all allowance for the charge of obsolete theology, irreligious ideas of worship, and general compromise, that can be made against the Church, any experiment along more advanced lines will soon prove that we are not down at the real objection. As a general rule, it is fair to state that the more advanced a Church is the smaller is its attraction. This is not to be taken to prove or disprove that the line of advance is wrong; but it does disprove the idea that there is any large mass of discontent which arises simply from these causes alone. It will not do, however, to fling off to the conclusion that the age is unspiritual. The trouble is not so deep as that either. But we are living through a time when spirituality conceives itself to be independent of and corrupted by anything external; the taste of the times tends to reticence in religion sufficient to make a man shrink from even the confession that is entailed in going to Church; and, above all, the modern mind is exceedingly restless and liable to boredom. On the whole, we may safely conclude that the misunderstanding and lowering of the Church idea is the chief cause of Churchless Christianity, and that Protestanism and Catholicism are jointly responsible for the deterioration that has taken place.

There were hopeful signs in the few years preceding the war that some revival of the Church idea was at hand. Not only was the attraction of the Catholic Church beginning to reassert itself upon quite unexpected minds; persons drifting over to Roman and High Anglicanism, who were constitutionally opposed to anything that would limit their freedom, but who, nevertheless, were prepared to put up with considerable discomforts if they could feel themselves in an institution that was embedded in history and deep in the secrets of common human nature; but there was growing up in both Catholic and Protestant quarters a disposition to justify the Church as Divine not by mere fiat so much as from its human necessity. Apostolic Succession is only a rather crude form of expressing the fact that life must flow from one soul to another in an unbroken succession. The doctrine of "no salvation outside the Church" is simply a rather harsh way of saying that human personality cannot exist without social contact. The power of the keys is only a special intensification of the power that is bestowed on all corporate life. It is not suggested that these explanations exhaust the meaning of the full Catholic claim, but they do provide avenues of advance towards an understanding of what it may be striving to express.

In Nonconformity, especially, external pressure, in the shape of the need for stopping a serious

defection towards Churchless Christianity, and something more deserving of being traced to internal inspiration, were operating towards the discovery of a statement of the need and power of the Church which was having an ever-growing attraction for the new generation of Free Churchmen, and seemed destined in time to embody itself both in a doctrine and example of the Church which might have gone far to solve the problem, and gradually, perhaps, to bridge over the gulf between Catholicism and Protestantism. These, then, were the pre-war conditions. What is going to happen after the war? It would be easier to discern the possibilities if we could gauge what has been happening during the war.

Surely there must have come to all genuine unattached Christians a sudden revelation of the utter impotence that their position involves. The war was launched upon us by the dispatch of a telegram, and the pressing of a button mobilised armies for destruction. The forces that make war were ready and only needed a single word. The masses of the people nowhere wanted or willed this war, but they were helpless, not only because the war system was ready, but also because the opposition consisted of vague desire and was composed of unrelated units. The forces for peace were not ready for mobilisation. If only there had been some organisation with its plans as well prepared, it is

agreed that the situation might have been saved. If there had only been a Church! There was; but it was distracted, divided, and was everywhere easily stampeded by national danger. The inherent righteousness of our cause will not explain the facts of the Church's acceptance; because that would not explain the precisely similar conditions in the enemy countries; because there has never been any opportunity for the Church to meet and deliberate according to its own peculiar methods; and because it is perfectly obvious that the Church was caught up into a machine by the frayed fringes of its garments. The Church will always be a prey to this sort of thing until it has a mind of its own and a body to express it. The peculiar righteousness of this war, as far as our side is concerned, does not explain the situation. There has always been found a Church to bless or a religion to sanction every war that there has ever been.

If the Church could have stood together on its own ground at the outbreak of the war it might have won back thousands of deserters and might have enormously shortened the war. It is as useless as it is easy to mourn over what might have been; but in this case it is not unprofitable to back-prophesy a little. If only there could have sounded forth from the whole Church a *distinctive* message! That this is not the impossible demand of an ecclesiastical idealist or the complaint of a disgruntled pacifist

may be discerned from the fact that such a typical person as Mr. H. G. Wells seems to have spent some time in the first incredible weeks meditating among the tombs of a village churchyard, recalling the fact that in every town and village in England there was a similar building dedicated to the same purpose, and wondering why there did not go forth from this mighty and mysterious institution some great word of light and leading.[1] Mr. Wells confessed to a yearning for some reconciliation with the Church, which he had always rather despised, and in the anguish of the first days of the war he came very near to saying the great word himself which he evidently had wished the Church to say. But the hour passed, and while men were getting their thoughts into shape, a few praying for light, many more reading their newspapers, the whole country was being swept by the hypnotism that war always brings.

This is not the place to say what that message ought to have been; for no private person can do that. But the Church ought to have *sought* a message. There ought to have been an immediate gathering of the leaders of the Church, sessions of prayer and discussion, a time of waiting and conferring. There was hardly any instinct to prompt this, strangely enough, and what attempts

[1] *See* Mr. Wells's articles in *The Nation* in the opening months of the war.

were made soon showed that men were gathering, not as members of the Holy Catholic Church, but as citizens of the British Empire. One never realised until then how utterly the Church idea had been destroyed even in the minds of those who made most profession of it.

There must be very few, even among the most convinced and enthusiastic supporters of the war, who feel that the Church has come out of this trial at all worthily; except, of course, those unfortunate leaders who always have to defend what has been done or resign their office. But there is no sign whatever that the Church has a distinctive outlook, a distinctive policy, or a distinctive message. It can only emit a solemn Amen to the decisions of politicians. Never was it manifested before how far the secularisation of the Church had gone. The absence of any real light on the situation may be discerned by the most charitable student who cares to unearth the official pronouncements of Bishops, or the resolutions of Nonconformist Assemblies. It is obvious that the Bishops have been reading the newspapers; and nothing else is at all obvious. The Official Church pronouncements remind one of those forms prescribed in popular law books for drawing up wills: "While deploring . . . Christianity . . . righteousness . . . assuring his Majesty's Government . . ." The rest does not matter.

All this can be defended, has been defended in

passionate speeches, in showers of pamphlets, and in scores of, one trusts, ephemeral books; but is there anyone who doubts that the net harvest for the Church will be an increase of contempt?

The poor parson, as always, comes in for a fair amount of ridicule and abuse; probably the less he deserves it the more he gets. It is pointed out how some of them have been compelled to change their tune. The noticeable fact is gloated over that they play the new tune much better than they did the old. At last there is no lack of something to preach about. The pulpits ring with denunciations of sin —of the German type. Quite right, no doubt, but somehow it is not very reminiscent of the Prophets to condemn the enemy at a distance, who can neither hear nor answer, and praise the audience close at hand. And now what eloquence in the appeal, what passion in forcing it home, what a clear and unmistakable challenge, what a wealth of persuasion—to join the army. Such are some of the things that have been said in bitterness even by those who support the war, but somehow feel that it is a little incongruous to be so much more efficient in defending the Government and recruiting for the army than in setting forth Christ and winning men for His cause. Bernard Shaw says the Churches ought to have been closed for the duration of the war. It is a rather drastic suggestion, and it may be dismissed as characteristic of its

author, but it would not have done so much damage to religion.

The belligerent parson is felt to be an anomaly by nearly everyone. If he feels like this, why does he not go and fight? The question has been debated in our newspapers with a feeling which shows it is a vital issue. The Church of England clergy are relieved by a decision of Canon law; they are forbidden to fight unless by the consent of their Bishop. It is said that a great many have asked permission, but have been refused. Non-conformists have been left to consult their own conscience, but very few actually in the ministry have gone. When conscription came, all clergy, ministers, and most theological students were exempted. There is no doubt that this exemption has done harm. What has been felt can be gathered from the temper of Parliament when the question is discussed, and the very large vote at the Trades Union Congress in favour of the exemption being removed. A defence has been made by the High Churchman on the line of priestly vocation, and if one accepts the idea of a distinct priestly caste perhaps there is nothing more to be said; the Broad Churchman has based the rightfulness of exemption on the ground that the minister is the official of an international society. Why this should not apply to a *member* of the international society no one can see. Everyone realises that the

disqualification of the priesthood rises from the idea that the priest is the typical, the representative Christian. It is a difficult problem if one wants to be fair to the whole situation; it has been immensely relieved by the Military Service Acts. Whether this is going to help us in the future is another matter. It is continually being said that it is the patriotism of the priests in France, their share in the common task and suffering, which has helped to change the attitude towards religion in that country since the war.[1]

But it ought in fairness to be said that there have been a few men in the pulpits of all denominations who have refused to change their convictions according to circumstance, and some whom this present issue has convinced of the absolute opposition between Christianity and war. Many of these have had rather a rough time both from their congregations and from their denominational officials and assemblies. It may well be that some of these have only themselves to blame; they may have been tactless, impossible and offensive. But the guilt and timidity which a more circumspect utterance has to display is even less worthy of praise. Perhaps, on the whole, the pacifist parson deserves most blame. For it has to be said of the "bellifist" that he allows little restraint or fear of the future in this or any other world to check him; while, if the

[1] It is apparently forgotten that they are conscripts.

pacifist really said what is burning within him, he would be out of his pulpit in one week and in prison the next. On *conviction,* the bellifists have it.

What in the way of extenuations will be pleaded by either side after the war remains to be seen. But no one has yet dared to prophesy that the Church's attitude is going to bring to her a harvest of souls and the grateful support of the nation as a whole. It will almost certainly mean a further alienation of the intellectuals, the expulsion of the advanced, the bitter contempt of the working man, a glorious time for the atheist and secularist, the increasing indifference of the masses.

Yet, even so, it is not a hopeless situation; because, while this is the natural conclusion to which everyone must be forced, there are other things besides natural conclusions to be reckoned with in this matter. Perhaps what is most hopeful in the situation is the agreement of the different denominations. The one exception is to be found in the Society of Friends, who have maintained their traditional opposition to war, although not perhaps in such an arresting or effective manner that they themselves feel particularly proud about it. An isolated attitude at this time may be condemned by the conforming as "superior," but that is not how most of those who have had to preserve it would describe their own feelings. On this question Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Nonconformists,

Unitarians must bear together whatever praise or blame is forthcoming. There is nothing to choose between them, whatever view you take. And we say this is hopeful. What we have been wanting for centuries is a hearty and wholesale repentance of the Church. It has been said that only a repentant Church will at last win the world. What has kept the Churches back from repentance has been the possibility of comparing themselves with other branches who have sinned more. Now at last God has concluded all under sin, perhaps to have mercy on all; for if there is to be a repentance now, there is some chance that it will be a real repentance.

But it will be denied by the defenders of the Church's action that there is anything to repent of. But even the Anglican Church knows better. The leaders of the National Mission have been careful to state that the Church is not to be asked to repent of her support of the war. On the contrary, according to the Bishop of London, the National Mission was to gain a million more men for army and to enable the nation to keep on to the end.[1] But the Bishop of Carlisle has been saying that if we were really Christians this war would not have happened.[2] It is no use carrying the matter further now, but there will be some stern encouragements to repentance after the war. The Church

[1] Speech at the Guildhall, September 26th, 1916.

[2] *The Christian World Pulpit*, October 6th, 1916.

has made a big bid for the gratitude of the world; she will find that she has not gained it; and when she turns to seek the "Well done" from her Lord there may be something else to be listened to. We shall have to face the question why we did not at least maintain that there was always another way with God, and why we didn't inquire what it was; why we did not concentrate upon the duty of forgiveness and the putting away of hate and vengeance; why the people were not encouraged to pray for universal deliverance. The Church could at least have shortened the war. But the doctrine that there can be no peace until the enemy is utterly crushed will, if persisted in—and one does not see how anything else is possible unless we are all going to eat our words—bring European civilisation to the dust and the Church of the West with it. Yet even from the dust the Church may arise. For with her there is always the capacity of repentance if the Lord cares still to knock at her door. It rests with His righteous judgment and His mercy for the world. But it is possible that the great fall of the Church may be the one thing that is needed to bring her to final fidelity; for it will mean the re-examination of her history, her claims, her doctrines, down to their very foundations. There can never be the half-and-half attitude again; whatever else is still open, compromise is now impossible.

III

THE DISCONTENT WITH SECTARIANISM

As soon as we begin to dream of the possibility of the Church coming to repentance and so to resurrection, we are bound to wonder what that risen Church will be like. It has always been recognised that the Church must be holy; but the holiness which is to mark the Church of the future must not only be manifested in the high devotion of its worship, in the constant production of the typical saint, that adventurer in the realm of the spirit; but there must be a definite separation from the world. The problem of how to keep a distinction between the Church and the world was the inspiration of the Puritan revolt in the seventeenth century, when an endeavour was made to construct a visible Church which should consist only of saints in the New Testament sense, namely, those who had been created anew by faith in Christ. This demand was made over against the Anglican idea that the Church is simply the nation in its ecclesiastical aspect, and against the Catholic idea that the Church consists of all the baptised. The attempt to adjust the National Church to this demand was found to be impossible, and then began the

separatist movement as the only way of realising the Puritan ideal. Without going into the experiments that were made, or discussing the various theories of Church membership that were tried, surely almost everyone who has lived in any of the separate systems will be found ready to acknowledge that no method of constructing a Puritan Church has yet been found. In the end the tests that are proposed come to be as formal as the submission to a rite or the recital of a creed. It is impossible to discover whether a man has been through the great experience from any willingness or unwillingness to confess that he has, and we have to descend to a judgment on the man's character and life, which is perforce an assumption on the part of his judges, and may be quite unfair to the man; and in actual practice the standard that comes to be applied is one of mere respectability. There is no doubt that the general tendency has lowered the significance of the Church, and there is now little to choose between Puritan and Catholic Churches. The most enthusiastic denominationalist would hardly dare to maintain that his Church was holier than others, that it produced a greater number of saintly men and women; he would fear the charge of bad taste, Pharisaism or inaccuracy that would certainly be forthcoming; and yet the attainment of a higher stage of holiness is the only possible justification of denominationalism.

One wonders if it is some unconscious recogni-

tion of this fact that, despite our rival systems and the claims we make for them, the world has no patience with our sectarianism because it can see no difference between the different denominations, and resents our claim to holiness because it can see no difference between the character and attitude of Church people and those who are outside. If that judgment has ever seemed unfair, it has plenty of evidence on its side now. All the denominations agree about the war, and here the Church takes precisely the same attitude as the world. The barriers between one another, and the barriers between Church and world, are seen to be quite unreal.

Whatever be the real significance of the world's condemnation of our sectarianism, there is no doubt that it is one of the commonest popular counts against the Church. How can a worldling be expected to believe in the Church? He immediately wants to know which Church. And it is simply futile for any Church to imagine that because it claims to be the one and only that this at all impresses the worldling. In differing degree they all do that, and the arguments used make no impression, because the worldling sees that we are all alike when it comes down to practical decisions. Our creeds and systems may differ, but in this world-crisis all Churches are alike, and they are just like the world. Why should the worldling come over to us? It may be, therefore, that his gibe at

the multitudinous sects of Christians has not arisen so much because of our internal divisions, but because of the more fundamental delusion that there exists any division between us and the world.

Yet perhaps it would be well to assume that the frequent condemnation of sectarianism is of itself worth some consideration, before we turn to the condemnation of exclusiveness. It is obvious to ourselves, and it must be obvious to the world, that the Church can give little help to the mighty tasks of rebuilding international and social relationships when it has not solved these problems for itself. There is not only the fact that the great divisions of Catholic and Protestant can be perceived to run in national groupings, but it only needs closer observation to discern that denominational differences seem to run according to social grades. It is a common complaint among Nonconformists that when their sons get on in the world they pass over to Anglicanism, if not in the first generation then certainly in the second. And in Nonconformity itself it would certainly be found that the differing denominations each represent a different average of social condition. If the outsider means that it is because of this that the Church must solve its own differences before it attempts to dictate to the world how to solve its problems, then the condemnation of our sectarianism is valid.

It may be, however, that it is just the spectacle

of a host divided against itself that moves the modern complaint, when the necessity of alliances, coalitions and united action are so apparent. No Church can be expected to act together in time of crisis if in more peaceful times it has become so broken up and separated. How can such a Church speak with one voice or express itself in the kind of action that is needed at a time like this? Perhaps a few may recognise that "national" Churches constitute a danger to humanity; though in the uprising of the national spirit that war has brought, even if this were recognised, it would hardly be made much of at present. It is here, as elsewhere, only possible for most of us to recognise how dangerous to the peace of the world the "nationalism" of the Lutheran Church has been. That judgment overlooks the attitude of the professors who sit fairly loose to Lutheranism, and the fact that the national attitude dominates Roman Catholics in Germany just as strongly; and, of course, overlooks the nationalism of our own Churches and especially of the one that qualifies its catholicism by "Anglo." It is to be feared that in war-time the prefix qualifies the substantive out of existence. We know now some things which "catholicism" does not mean when our friends use it with such unction and superiority.

It is when we come to the proposals for the union of the Churches that we find the popular

denunciations of sectarianism wear very thin. The plea of toleration sounds very soothing to those who have had to fight to obtain it. At this demand from without the Nonconformist may pride himself that the man of the world has come to see what is right in our contention, which only confirms our sense of injustice at the high Anglicans refusing to admit the validity of our orders, that we are Churches, or that we possess the Sacraments. Are we sure that this judgment from without means anything at all? First of all, there are plenty in Nonconformity who don't believe in any orders save those which they issue themselves; who make less and less of the Church and the Sacraments. How can they resent the Anglican refusal to admit that we possess what we regard as worthless? And does the world's conversion to the doctrine of "toleration" at all represent the true Nonconformist spirit? If Nonconformity has simply come to mean a claim that everyone should be allowed to worship as they please, and should be recognised as Christians without further controversy or contempt, then some Nonconformists have a long way to go yet, for they will not extend that kind of toleration to Anglicans or Romans. But should we be satisfied if Rome and Canterbury altered their present attitude towards us and we all continued to go on in our own particular way? Do we admit that in Christ's Church temperament, climate, up-

bringing are the only guides? We may have come down to that idea; but that has always been the world's attitude when it has given a thought to religion; it has not moved up to us at all.

But most suggestions go further than this. They propose reducing all the denominations to their lowest common denominator, abolishing all insistence upon distinctive points and finding some all-embracing compromise. Sometimes proposals of this nature go even further than lowering the denominational differences; they even propose that all differences shall be done away with between Christianity and the other religions. We have had from even exalted quarters since the outbreak of war the recommendation to unite on the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man. How it is proposed to get any enthusiasm for these nebulosities does not appear; for it is to nebulosities that these terms must be reduced unless we can have some concrete idea of the nature of God and the measure of man. These proposals ignore the fact that religions get their inspiration not from the things that are agreed by all, but from the things where they have a distinctive message. That such proposals should be put forward now is disappointing indeed. They have been made before in less necessitous times, and wherever they have been attempted they have failed to waken any enthusiasm or accomplish anything for mankind. If the world is going

to be helped now it must be rather by some dogmas that really mean something.

The complication of denominationalism works out disastrously at the Front. We get the exclusive claims of Anglicanism exciting ridicule and anger there, and, on the contrary, there is the closer agreement found possible between the various schools of Nonconformists. Is not the verdict from the evidence that Nonconformity provides a basis for union? We may get the fact that the Y.M.C.A. has provided a platform on which all denominations can speak put forward as an indication that the Y.M.C.A. provides the right basis of union. Even if one could reconcile oneself to the fact that the type of worship provided at a Brotherhood or Y.M.C.A. meeting was the ideal thing, is there anyone alive who imagines that the Catholic Churches would ever condescend to that position? and are there even many Nonconformists now who would like them to? There is a place for the Brotherhood type of meeting, a very large and valuable place; every Church ought to be thankful for the common platform that the Y.M.C.A. has provided during the war, and will continue, it is hoped, to provide after the war; but it is quite another thing to believe that it would be good if these were the only types of worship provided.

It is to be sincerely hoped that there will be no attempt to follow these will-o'-the-wisps; for they

will only lead some of us into a religious swamp and exalt the counter-attraction of a city with walls, a city with light and hearth fires to welcome.

It is a proposal of far more value when it is suggested that the Churches should unite together for specific purposes on which they are agreed, such as Purity, Social Reconstruction, the Observance of the Lord's Day, Temperance, and—one wishes one could add—Peace. This is not only of practical importance, but it may have a far-reaching effect. It is not suggested for a moment that federation for these practical and peripheral objects can satisfy any true conception of the Unity of the Church; but it has already been found that through such knowledge of one another as federation for these purposes brings there is bound to come an increasing respect, the longing that we might come to an agreement on things which are far more important, and at last be able to worship together the One Lord whom at present we must worship apart.

There is a line of approach which requires such patience, and seems to be so inevitably slow that many turn aside from it in impatience, but which it is possible the war may speed up, both by intensifying the desire and quickening the rate of progress. It is across the deepest ditch that divides the Churches, namely, questions of historical succession, orders, governments and sacraments, that reconciliation has to be reached. The recognition

that it is through the difficulties we are to seek harmony is itself a hopeful sign. It means an assurance that the problem is going to be taken seriously. And it is not too much to say that already an apparently hopeless situation is slowly yielding. There is not only the proposal for the World Congress on Faith and Order which is actuated by the determination to face up to the most difficult problems, but there is a growing appreciation that there is no great stand made on these points that does not represent some vital religious interest; and therefore it is our duty to try to seek out, not the error which we can so easily discern, but the truth which alone could give strength to the position. There are fewer people who now think that every Roman is simply scheming to reintroduce the Inquisition, or that every Anglican is concerned only with outward forms. There is growing up a mutual appreciation of the forms which other people use in their worship and the distinctive thing for which each great branch of the Church stands. It only needs another stage of understanding to be reached to see that to have different denominations to preserve these distinct customs and different points of truth is not really serving the cause of truth at all. These things in isolation do not serve any useful purpose; for they do not correct the Churches that are without them, and the distinctive witness of each only absorbs too much attention and produces an unbalanced type

of Church and Christian character. It is beginning to be felt that the things for which the different denominations stand ought to be fused together into one Church, when the balance of truth would be gained and a real comprehensive Catholicism be the mark of the Church. It may be that the war will quicken the recognition that this is the only real remedy for the discerned evils of sectarianism and generate some great movement that will fling down the barriers. But it ought to be recognised that nothing but a passionate ideal for a Church in which all these differences have been resolved and all the contributing parts have been given full representation will provide either the inspiration or the true basis for reunion. One could wish that there were more signs of this recognition and desire. Even the war has not shaken us out of our complacency with sectarianism, save in so far as we see the thing makes for inefficiency; we have not yet realised its spiritual dangers and how it is hindering the coming of the true Catholic Church.

What about the other objection to the exclusiveness of the Church? It is felt that the Church draws a line between itself and the world which it has no right to draw, and that it draws it in a way that is absolutely unreal. The Church demands the confession of certain Creeds or of a certain experience; and these demands cut out those who claim that they are just as good Christians. This

is reasonable enough, however difficult it may be to see what the remedy is. Everyone ought to see that it is no use pretending to have a Church unless it has a mind of its own and stands for something distinct. What the better kind of outsider complains of is that the Church puts forward certain tests which prove nothing. Many profess the Creeds who do not evince the slightest proof that they understand what they profess or realise what the confession commits them to in actual life. It is easy enough for men to profess to have had a certain experience of religion when once the phraseology gets current; and suggestion itself may induce an unreal experience. But these are matters capable of adjustment wherever there is sincerity on both sides. For even if the Church has not found the right test for belief or character, it is becoming clearer that the understanding that she does stand for certain things has been of great value. If the Church had not been rigid on some matters a witness of the greatest value would have been lost to mankind. The witness has not always been made in the best way or expressed in the clearest terms, but history has shown that the Church was often committed to truth whose abandonment was demanded by what proved to be only a temporary and superficial phase of thought.

But some go further than this and ask that the line between Church and world should be entirely

effaced; in fact, that the Church should cease to be a distinct body at all. Surely everyone can now see that the attempt to erase this line of demarcation has been only too successful; but instead of the effect being to lift the world to the level of the Church, it has only brought the Church down to the level of the world. It would be cynically amusing, were it not so tragic, to find *The British Weekly* still maintaining that the methods of the Church must be different from the methods of the world,[1] when that paper has been foremost in advocating the Christian sanction of the world's way of war. There *is* every right to demand the wiping out of even the faintest line of separation if the Church has been right in agreeing with the world that the war is the only way out of our present troubles. But surely it is the retracing of that line and the rebuilding of a very high wall that is at present the greatest need of the Church and the one hope of the world.

There is a line along which we may reach a reconciliation of the Church's imperative need to preserve distinct her constitution and message, and the demand which comes from the man who finds himself shut out by the impossibility of confessing a certain creed or experience. Let it be understood that the Church was created by a certain experience and stands for certain things, but let

[1] *The British Weekly*, Leading Article, August 10th, 1916.

the gates be opened wide for those to come in who *desire* the Christian experience or who want to be reckoned members of the Church which stands for such and such things. And then let us trust the power of the Church to keep burning at her heart in the saints she creates and the theology she puts forward a fire which will purge out all undesirable elements and continually attract those who desire to appropriate the Church's faith. This means abandoning creeds as tests, but it also means retaining them as great historic affirmations of the Church, which still guide her thought and express her faith on matters once challenged.

Then let the cleavage between the Church and the world be made to appear not in abstract claims, but in the Church's ordering of her own life on lines always in advance of the rest of humanity. The Church need not be considered as an ark in a storm, or a city walled against hostile attack; these similes no longer represent the true position to-day; but we can still demand that the Church shall be the advance guard of humanity, conscious of its relationship to God, leading where others shall follow. It must be admitted that it is this leadership of humanity that is most to seek in the present relative condition of the Church and the world. But this can probably be traced largely to the worldly notion that the majority must rule, because that represents the voice of God. You cannot thus

apply democracy to Church affairs, because, in religion at any rate, the minority is often in the right. It is the leadership of those who are fit to lead that we want to secure. At present the leadership of humanity is lost to the Church, because leadership within the Church is repressed and discouraged. Perhaps here we have to come to some reconciliation between Episcopal and democratic government. If only the saints were chosen as leaders, instead of the safe men, and if only when some adventurous souls were chosen for leaders they did not immediately grow timid and cautious! Here is the real problem. It can only be solved as the Church concerns herself with the manufacture of saints and prophets, and learns to honour them, and then we shall see the Church begin to take her rightful position as the real head of humanity. We need not trouble about dividing lines if only there is movement and the right persons are at the head. And this will almost certainly not be secured until we have blended again the Catholic and Protestant types of Christianity. For Catholicism has always recognised that there must be leaders, but has nearly always stoned those that God sent to her; and Protestantism has always recognised that if there are to be leaders there must be individual freedom, and yet has come down eventually to the rule of the average and the mediocre. We want room to grow leaders, and that means that

individual liberty must be cherished as one of the indispensable channels of the Holy Ghost. But it must also be discovered how to trust the leadership of holiness and love, and to abandon that based upon the idea of military obedience. Leaders in spiritual things must lead by reason of their power in character and the superior consistency of life, and we must grow a Church democracy that understands that no leadership is acceptable unless it continues the Church's historical development and is itself manifestly led by Christ.

We can see somewhat dimly how the problem is to be solved, and we can now look round to see which of the Churches is moving most rapidly towards such an ideal; for it is only such a Church that can hope to survive the war.

IV.

WHICH OF THE DENOMINATIONS WILL SURVIVE?

Comparisons are odious, but we shall have to make them. Everything is being tested by fire, and not everything will stand the test; the most ancient institutions are going into the melting pot; they will not come out as they went in. What will happen to the various Church embodiments with which we are familiar in this land? Which of the denominations will survive?

A good deal will depend upon the duration of the war. The war may go on for another year without any very profound change in our economic basis or our social structure being thrust upon us. The collapse that almost everyone expected at the beginning has not come, and things are continuing marvellously the same. The fabric of our social order has shown itself capable of bearing such an enormous strain without snapping, that prophecy on these matters has already been severely discredited. But however difficult it may be to fix a time beyond which, if the war continues, we shall be faced with catastrophic changes, there is such a danger point, and once past that we shall see things beginning

to fall in. If a testing time of that nature comes, we can infer from history that only those things will remain that go deepest into our common life and minister to our greatest necessities. Then it would probably be found that age would tell not against, but for, the chances of persistence. Some of our Churches have already stood the test of great convulsions, and may do so again. Swift adaptability might give to others the power to tide over the new time; but none of our present denominations seem to possess such a character. Even a great economic revolution would leave those Churches least shaken which are oldest, because they rest more upon real property.

But if no such apocalyptic conditions are coming upon us it will still be found that the necessity for the various Churches will have been tested to their foundations, and everything representing only a temporary or merely temperamental need will disappear. There may be no dramatic collapses. Some of the smaller denominations may scrape along for a bit and refuse to recognise that they are slowly but inevitably dying; but though it may be a painful and long-drawn-out affair, it will be found that they contracted their last illness in this terrible time. We conclude, therefore, that the older a Church is the better able it will be to survive, not only because it is more deeply embedded in the social structure, but because its long experience has

taught it which elements in human nature are most unchanging. It may seem strange to suggest that a law looking so like our old friend "the survival of the fittest" should be applied to the Church of Christ; but all history seems to show that there is such a law, and that it does operate even in this realm.

There is, of course, another alternative which the operation of the law of survival also suggests: namely, that some quite new Church will start, as at the Reformation or the Evangelical Revival. But even this, though for a time it may bid fair to dominate all others, will just in proportion to its novelty only the more swiftly decline. The very old and the very new will have the best chance, though time will soon differentiate in favour of the old.

We do not propose to consider this denominational question in anything like detail, but only to confine ourselves to the main types and to those which confront us here in our own land. The war has raised again in a more intense form what was an academic question with a few Anglicans, namely, the possibility of closer relations with the Eastern Church. The necessity of altering our opinions about Russia now she is our ally has undoubtedly taught us how much good we can find in something we have been taught to fear and detest, when we really try; and however cynical one can become as

one reads the new eulogies of everything Russian, it is rather a phenomenon from which we ought to take hope. On the same measure it should not be absolutely impossible for us to be loving the Germans before long, if only our political masters tell us that it is necessary. And the discovery that there is so much that is mystical and popular and really Christlike in the religion of the Holy Orthodox Church is, after all, only an augury of what we might come to feel about the Roman Catholic Church, not only because of our ancient connection, but also because of its closer affinities with our own religious spirit. Therefore we propose to leave the question of the Eastern Church, simply because whatever applies to our relationship with that Church applies still more to our relationship with Rome.

We propose, however, to discuss Anglicanism first. It is not the oldest of the Churches we have to consider. Rome occupies that place; but the Reformation has accomplished at least two things: it has made the Roman system seem alien, and it has given us a most healthy fear and a most hearty prejudice against any return to it.

No one can doubt that the war is going to help Anglicanism, as compared with Rome or Nonconformity. However much the Nonconformist may protest that, on a statistical basis, the "national" Church has no longer the right to its name, it is,

nevertheless, the Church which most fully enshrines our national history and represents our national temper. It holds the great events of our history in its hands, clear for all to see. The struggles of our national life, our sorrows, our triumphs, our sins and our pride, are built into the very fabric of our Cathedrals, Abbeys, and Parish Churches. If "England" means to us something more than the dear green land, something more than the generation now alive; if it means our history, there is simply nowhere where that history lives for us as it does in the Anglican Church. A man can only hate it if he dates the beginning of the world from the seventeenth century and thinks Puritanism the resurrection of Christianity after a sleep in the tomb for fifteen hundred years; no one can forbear to cherish some love for the Church of England if he loves England; for it is the best monument of England to which he can point.

At the time of arising of the national spirit like the present, the natural attraction of the Anglican Church must make itself even more widely felt. At other times, when the most patriotic of us are always inclined to criticise our nationality, then we are inclined to criticise Anglicanism. It represents the national spirit in its bad as well as in its good qualities; it is built on the system of compromise by which we Englishmen rule our lives; it is essentially the Church of "good form";

it goes along with the Public School type and with *Punch*. The Anglican is an essentially conventional Church, it is the Church of all respectable people, it is the gentleman's Church. It is snobby, squirish and a bit feudal, of course. It is not always like the Church of Jesus Christ, and whether it would more astonish the Apostles or be more astonished at them is an interesting question; but the chief thing is that it fits the average Englishman like a glove. It is decent, it is not fanatical, its devotion is reticent, and it knows better than any Church in Christendom how to administer just enough religion to keep the soul quiet and contented. It has discovered exactly how much religion the Englishman can stand. It is the *English* Church, and that explains everything.

If the Anglican Church only knew what an opportunity it now had, it could sweep Nonconformity out of existence. Perhaps the National Mission showed some astute though entirely subconscious recognition that this was the time. There are very few people in Nonconformity now who have the faintest idea of what Nonconformity means. They are quite ignorant of its history; not that closer acquaintance with its history would always make them anxious to continue Nonconformists. They are Nonconformists, not by conviction, but just like most of us are what we are ecclesiastically—by pure accident. These people,

especially when they get touched by culture or success, are always dribbling over, and the Anglican Church ought to be able to sweep them in by thousands now. Then there are the people who never go to church at all. At this moment millions of them are in the army and will come under the influence of the Anglican system. There are the great national events, the celebration of some great leader's death, the observance of Intercession days; all these must sweep up the fringes of our religious life, and sweep them in one direction—towards the national Church.

But there are nobler things than these in the Anglican Church, and these may attract the better spirits without, who may now be feeling the hunger for God. Anglicanism has never been without a succession of saintly souls, and it has never lost the spirit of earnestness. Ever since the Tractarian movement it has been producing more and more genuinely Catholic Christians, who are not concerned for the Establishment, but fear it; who do not make the English Official and his wife the types on which they keep an imitative eye; who are more concerned for the Kingdom of God than for the British Constitution, and more in love with a Universal than with an Imperial Church.

No one who knows the history of the Anglican Church during the last century, or who comes into contact with its best representatives, can imagine

for a moment that the Anglican Church is either dead or is dying. The National Mission is the latest sign of a genuine religious life. It has been perhaps one of the greatest adventures that the Anglican Church has ever made. It has arisen out of a concern that all is not well, and witnesses to a half-concealed uneasiness about the war being a sign of nascent Christianity, or the soldier's sacrifice an implicit confession of Christ, or any of that nonsense. Many of the clerics may be saying these things, but they do not believe them. It may be clearly enough laid down by some brainless prelates that the Repentance to which the nation is called has nothing whatever to do with the fact that we are at war, which in their judgment is the sign that the nation is religious at heart and is prepared to take up the Cross and follow Christ; but there would be no mission of this kind if this was what the Church felt in its very soul. The Mission has outwardly failed. It started well, but it rushed into publicity before the Holy Ghost had furnished either illumination or power. Yet it witnesses to a deep concern in the living heart of the Church, and it shows that adventure is not dead. For if it should have succeeded; if the people had really been touched by religion and started to pour out penitential prayers, seeking repentance, asking where hope was to be found, there is not the shadow of doubt that unless the movement also

spread at once among our Allies on the Continent and touched our enemies in the same way it would have produced national disaster. If anything happened which brought Jesus Christ really into view —there crucified on His Cross—it would be all up with carrying on the war. Therefore it was the bravest thing that the Church of England has ever attempted. That it has outwardly failed does not matter nearly so much as that it should have been thought of and attempted.

But it is just where Anglicanism shows signs of life, gives evidence of deep religious sincerity and breaks beyond its national insularity, that it begins to get dangerous to itself. The most deeply earnest section in the Church is undoubtedly the High Church section. Their emphasis is on the Catholic type of religion, not on the compromise of the Prayer Book, the Elizabethan Settlement, or the Establishment principle. Now it is at this point that Anglicanism begins to awaken more than perhaps it can satisfy. If we take the stiff and "spiky" type of High Churchism, the idea that Apostolic Succession is essential to the Church and Sacraments and the historic faith of Christendom must be maintained with unyielding rigidity, then the question is started whether one must not go further. We know what Rome thinks of Anglican Orders and the Anglican Mass; and on the rigid High Church theory it seems to us that Rome is right.

The Orders are doubtful; the Reformation Settlement was a break in the continuity of the Church which all the restorations in the world have not been able to conceal; the Anglican Communion Service is mutilated and unsatisfying. Moreover, even if these points could be cleared up satisfactorily the fact remains that the whole Anglican Church does not accept these High Church theories.

Now it is precisely these theories which, if pressed, make some people want to go further; either nearer to Roman Catholicism or further away from it. There is a Nonconformist position which has yet to be answered, one which rests on Christian principle and in the light of history finds it impossible to believe that there is this absolute necessity either for Apostolic Succession or for the rigid idea that Sacraments are necessary to salvation. It is doubtful if even Rome has the Apostolic Succession; it cannot be proved, at any rate. It is doubtful what religious purpose can be served by eating the actual flesh which was born of Mary and hung upon the Cross, even if that is what the elements become after consecration; that is to say, it is doubtful whether transubstantiation is Christian in theory or is an actual fact. And, at any rate, religion can and does live outside these things.

It is quite possible that as England gets more Christian it will get less compromising, and then it may be that the Anglican *via media* will cease to

attract at all. The Anglican claim will simply stand at the fork of the road and will drive all real travellers to Rome or to Nonconformity. Even if "national" religion is attractive now, there may be considerable recoil from it after the war. Its treachery to Christ may stand revealed, and men will crave an international Church. England has been compelled politically to abandon her splendid isolation. She no longer stands outside the Continental struggles, merely exerting diplomatic pressure on this side or that, or sending a small army to take part in some quarrel. For good or evil she has thrown her whole weight on one side and placed her very life and existence in the balance. It is obvious that she cannot withdraw from the consequences of this; and she will naturally find herself drawn also into the religious struggle of the Continent. Our soldiers will have been brought into touch with Catholicism as it is, not as it is pictured either in Protestant calumnies or in Roman eulogies. They have seen the splendid shrines of Northern France, they have been confronted with the crucifix until it has burned into their mind, they have seen the common people at their devotions. The ancient mystery, the passionate devotion, the grip on common life that Rome still keeps may exert its hold on them. Or they may think the forms mere mumbling and superstition; some of them get very tired of the crucifix; they may conclude that this

religion only inserts itself into life, does not alter it. They, too, will come back convinced that the dilemma clears itself like this: if Anglican, then why not Roman, and if not Roman, then something far removed from it?

A bold stroke would, of course, save the Anglican Church from further decline and have enormous influences on the future of religion in this country; but it seems too much to hope. Let the Act of Uniformity be repealed. The Prayer Book as it stands cannot survive the war. The Services must be altered, the lectionary revised so as to get rid of some of the utterly demoralising and meaningless lessons, some of the Psalms and some of the verses excised for the purposes of public worship, the Eucharist remodelled on sound liturgical lines, much more variety provided for Morning and Evening prayer, and a place provided for extempore prayer. Let there be a special ordination service for those coming from other denominations, recognising and extending their orders. Let there be some effort made to keep the attraction of the altar and the power of the pulpit in harmonious balance; secure freedom from State dictation, a system of dual control for the appointment of ministers and the election of Bishops, provision for real representative government in which the laity have a due share, and it would not be long before the Anglican Church began to show in outward organisation what is cer-

tainly alive and moving at its heart. At present, however much it may wish to, it cannot move; but it is by no means a hopeless Church; its opportunities are still such as no Church in Christendom has ever had, but they must be seized now or they will pass never to return.

It falls for us to consider what is going to happen to the Roman communion. We may be sure that Rome is going to continue. The war will not destroy her. Macaulay's prophecy about her still existing when the New Zealander takes his stand upon a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's, and Tyrrel's comment that when Rome dies the other Churches may order their coffins, remain still true. Yet any great immediate movement towards Rome is difficult to think of. There is Protestant prejudice to overcome, and however unfair it may be it will take a long time to overthrow. There is the fact that it is the "Roman" Church, and to the person who does not feel the pull of history or the glamour of "the Eternal City," that means that it is an Italian Church. Rome looks alien in England, however different it may have been in the past, and in the popular judgment the Roman religion is not respectable. Yet this might help a little, for after the war no one will be particularly attracted to a respectable Church. The issues have shown that if we are going to follow Jesus we must be prepared to go forth

to Him "without the camp." And if one looks round for a maligned, feared, non-respectable Church one is forced to choose either some queer sect or Rome. It is the sacrifice in becoming a Roman that still holds power, and has given to Newman popular canonisation.

The old repulsions and the old attractions still remain. There is her great antiquity, which, whether it goes back to St. Peter or not, does go back to the primitive Church which shed its blood in streams for centuries to gain for us religious freedom. There is her wonderful fidelity to the faith. Rome may have added to and corupted the faith; she has never come near denying or surrendering it. She retains in her worship the note of mystery; he is a poor Christian to whom the Mass makes no appeal with its unbroken representation of the sacrifice of Calvary offered every day on countless altars through all these changing centuries unchanged. It is the Church of the saints: Augustine, Francis, Catherine; the Church of the mystics: Julian, Thomas à Kempis, John of the Cross; it was the spiritual home of Dante, Pascal, Newman; if she has sometimes persecuted her sons, none but she could have borne them: Abelard, Savonarola, Luther; a Christian must want some inheritance in a Church like that. And even if it prescribes the form somewhat rigidly it keeps alive a passionate devotion; if it has surrounded the

figure of Jesus with crowds of saints that seem to us to stand too near Him, and dispute our adoration, Jesus Christ and Him crucified is the living heart of its religion, and it has never doubted that He should be worshipped. With all its call to an asceticism that some would judge out of place in genuine Christianity, with all its theological rigidity and its imperial pride, it keeps a large heart for common humanity, and is the last Church in the West to retain the poor. One would consent to tramp many tortuous paths to come at the living founts they lead to, submit to many disagreeable things when it offers us so much that is food for the hungry soul, put up with the rough, iron-bound casket for the sake of the jewel it contains.

But one has to weigh against this the history of cruelty and intolerance, the stubbornness and blindness, the scandalous lives of many who were vowed to holiness, and of more who were admitted to the highest place. One has to consider the exclusive priesthood, the excommunicating spirit, the claims of the Papacy, the gross mixture of doctrine that has to be accepted as a whole simply because the Church teaches it. Above all, there is the military spirit which has crushed many a fine soul, the legal bondage that cramps the intellect, the intrigue that has disillusioned the honest, and the spy system that has broken many a heart. It resolves itself into a struggle of the heart against the head, the

past against the future, food or liberty; and whichever way one decides, it divides a man against himself.

The great question is whether the war will make any difference. An idea is being proclaimed in some quarters that the war is the logical outcome of Protestantism and a divided Church. Martin Luther is made responsible for the modern Prussian spirit. He ruthlessly trampled on things he had once himself regarded as sacred, he made the Church in Germany subservient to the State, he told the nobles to shoot the peasants down; and the end of all that is the rationalism, the brutality, the atheism of modern Germany, with its sole faith in Might, its doctrine of the State as superior to moral or religious considerations, its utter inhumanity. And it is all due to Protestantism. We must simply record on the other side the Kensitite verdict that the war is due to Vatican intrigue and the Pope is at the bottom of the whole business; and the philosophical idea that Rome, with its militaristic government, its great faith in externals, its exercise of arbitrary power, feeds militarism and leads to belief in war. These opposite opinions may be left to exterminate one another like Kilkenny cats.

To come to a more reasonable judgment. It is held that the attitude of the present Pope is going to make a serious difference to the future

hold of the Roman Church over the Continental nations. The Pope's refusal to preach a "holy war," to protest against the invasion of Belgium, to denounce the atrocities of the Germans, shows him to be the worst kind of coward, and reveals the utter moral degradation to which the Papacy has at last been brought. If against this it is urged that the Pope had to remain neutral, that it is not for him to judge, and that from the day of his accession he has never ceased to urge counsels of moderation and appeal for peace,[1] then it is maintained that the neutrality has simply been an attempt to whitewash the other side, and that his appeals for peace are nothing more than dishonest attempts to play the German game.

It is no use arguing in the temper of the hour; we shall not be able to judge the matter clearly until the war is over; but if anyone will take into consideration the fact that the Pope pleaded for peace at the beginning of his reign, when the Central Powers were at the height of their success, that these appeals have been based upon the highest grounds of humanity and religion, and have been expressed with a concern and feeling that it is impossible to suspect of insincerity; and if we try to think what the general verdict upon the behaviour of ecclesiastics will be when the war is over, it is not beyond the bounds of probability that it will

[1] "The Pope on War and Peace."

be recognised that the Pope was the only Church leader who played a worthy part and has remained true to Christian principles. And no one can doubt that the Pope has risked the prestige of the Papacy tremendously by taking this line, and that he must know it. His speeches have been suppressed, explained away, and his advice simply ignored by the great mass of those who owe him obedience. It may be that he will utterly fail to influence the situation, that he will not even be represented at the council to settle the peace of Europe, that there may be serious national defections, especially in the case of Belgium; and that the Papacy may perish. But if it perishes through faithfulness to Christ and humanity it will only be to rise again to new power.

What is more important to decide is whether there is any chance that Roman Catholic religion will be altered by the war. What many have been feeling about Rome at this time is that it is pledged more than any other Church to certain fundamental principles and practices of Christianity, and that its internationalism has compelled a certain attitude that we look for in national Churches in vain. In the tremendous battle that we have to face on the sacramental meaning of marriage, the prevention of birth and the call to chastity, we have to look to Rome to maintain the full Christian ideal unalterable and set it forth in its most drastic demand. But

is there any hope that Rome is going to interpret her position in any other than an imperialistic, legal and military fashion? It may be that we are starving for some things that Rome holds, but does it mean the loss of all liberty as the price of obtaining them? One feels like a mouse looking at the cheese in a trap: it looks like cheese, it smells like cheese, it must be cheese; but there is this unnatural and uninviting arrangement of hooks and wires and springs which rouses our fears and suspicions. It is not that we are demanding that there shall be a Protestant Reformation of Rome. There are many things in the spirit of Protestantism that we desire to see for ever excluded. What one wonders is whether there might not be some change in spirit, giving to the doctrines a humane significance, making obedience no longer a legal affair whose breach was to be visited with pains and penalties, reforming the spirit of the hierarchy and the claims of the Papacy on lines of service, making the Pope a true "Servus servorum." The Pope has seen this war as few have seen it. If only this drove him to take action to prevent war in the future, the Papal infallibility which is such a sore difficulty with many of us might come to be interpreted as at least a providential error. Just suppose that the Pope was now to declare it to be not allowable for a Christian to fight! The Pope has expressed desires which show that he has some other feeling

for the Christians who are not in communion with the Roman Church than that they are simply schismatics and heretics; he has declared that he regards them all as his children at a time like this. Will he not attempt to make that real by recognising that the great schisms of the past were not due to sin and rebellion, but to religious needs which were being unsatisfied, and make provision for the freer forms of worship and expression to exist alongside the unchanging forms of centuries and the Church's determination to abide by the faith committed to her? Some rather enigmatical sentences are to be found in some of the speeches of Benedict XV. which might be taken to mean that the claim to temporal power was to be abandoned; while on the other hand they might be taken to mean that the Pope was demanding that he should have some neutral territory over which he would be temporal prince;[1] which looks like the States of the Church back again. A rumour has been spread from some Catholic sources that the claim to temporal power is to be abandoned, and that the Vatican and the Quirinal have already settled their differences since the war began. One's heart quickens at the suggestion, and all sorts of forgotten dreams come back to mind. Dante's prophecy might be fulfilled, the White Pope would be here at last, and the successor of the Blessed Peter would show

[1] "The Pope on War and Peace," pp. 8, 20.

by his life that he was prepared to imitate the life of the humble fisherman to whom he owes his dignity, and by taking up the cross can prove himself worthy indeed of the name Vicar of Christ.

It will seem in the opinion of many wildest folly, if not treachery to freedom, thus to dream of what changes might yet come to the Roman Church. But we claim the right to regard that Church, for all that makes us to sorrow and stumble at her present condition, as at least a true branch of the Church of Christ; and because we hold this we must allow that she may be revisited by Christ and reformed according to the principles of the Gospel. It may be from the most unlikely quarter, as Protestants would judge it, that the great revival of religion will come; and until Rome is revived and brought back to the pure apostolic spirit there is little hope for the reunion of Christendom and, therefore, for the conversion of the world. We therefore dare to hope and pray for the Mother Church of Christendom and for her Supreme Pontiff.

We turn last of all to discuss what effect the war will have on the Nonconformist Churches. It is difficult for one who owes to them nearly the whole of his religious life, most of his ideals and inspirations, a vast circle of friendships and the freedom of a hundred pulpits, to criticise the Nonconformist Churches without seeming to lack all sense

of gratitude. But it is because of their past history, because of their superior illumination on many points, that their present attitude seems so deplorable. We expected nothing different from the Catholic Churches with their past record and their received teaching; we expected nothing better from a Church which owes its very existence to the State, but we did expect something different from Nonconformity. We had always understood that the deepest principle of Nonconformity was not so much nonconformity to the liturgy or government of another Church, but nonconformity to the world; that we did not demand freedom from the State just for convenience, but because we had seen, however dimly, that the Kingdom of Christ is destined to supplant the State. The Catholic Church has always recognised the theory of the two swords, though it has always kept the way open to a higher judgment by its absolutist demand that the Church must be the superior state because it has the spiritual sword. The Anglican and Lutheran Churches have always been more or less Erastian; though we recognise among High Anglicans especially a growing desire to be free from the intolerable conditions this involves.[1] While they hold to their characteristic positions, however, they are bound to support the State when it is committed to war. But the Free Churches, maintaining that

[1] Cp. "Churches in the Modern State." Dr. J. N. Figgis.

the Church must be left free from State control, have always been critical of the area over which the State has the right to rule. On the question of a State-dictated form of worship the Nonconformists have been willing to rend the Church of Christ in these islands into fragments. But when the State has decided that there is now no other way to save the world but to go to war, to crush the enemy, to conscript our manhood for this task, and to take away many of our ancient liberties, the Free Churches have decided that nothing must be done to break the unity of the State, and that conscience must be entirely ruled by the idea of the safety of the community. It may be urged that the Free Churches stand where they do because they are convinced that in this struggle we have righteousness on our side, that God has called us to this task, and that this is our present way of bearing the cross. One need not dwell on the fact that before the war many Free Church leaders would have regarded any such conclusion ruled out *a priori*. And even if we must believe that it was not fear or hurried judgment that has compelled them to change their convictions, we have the right to inquire what this change of opinion really entails. Surely no one of them thinks for a moment that this is a circumstance that is never likely to happen again in the history of the world. All idea that this tiresome compromise of Christian principles

would only have to be accepted for an unprecedented emergency which would never happen again; in short, that this was to be a war to end war; of all that little is now heard. The Free Churches must abandon once for all their toying with non-resistance, the martyr nation, and other ideas of like character in which they have indulged in the past, and must stand side by side with the other Churches and with the typical German doctrine that when we come to matters between State and State the principles of Christ do not apply. Not only so, but they must go on to recognise that this is a point on which individual conscience must not be allowed a decision. First conscription, and then the penalising of those who resist on conscientious grounds has to be admitted. For the sake of conscience a man may split the Church, but he must not split the nation. He may decide that he will rather leave the Church than use a certain Prayer Book, but he may not discuss whether he ought to kill. This shows what our relative values are. What seems perfectly clear is that the Free Churches have lost their *raison d'être*. It is no hesitant prophecy that after the war they will find that the public has discovered that their nonconformity is superficial and their freedom a shibboleth, and they will be left to wilt and wither away. The real principle of Nonconformity was not being understood by us in any deep fashion before the war,

and our freedom was not being used in order to follow Christ more perfectly. Nonconformity had become simply a determination to be unlike certain other Churches and its freedom a political rather than a religious principle. Some Nonconformists have followed their principles, and as a consequence there are more Nonconformists in prison to-day than at any time since the Toleration Act was passed; only this time they are cast off, suspected, brow-beaten, sneered at by those who have actually manufactured them.

If only Nonconformity could have stood clear to its witness that, whatever the circumstances, Christ's was the only way to redeem the world, that, whatever secular politicians might judge, we know that God has in His resources a better way than this, and, without necessarily resisting any of the acts of the Government, had called the people insistently to prayer that God would reveal His will, not only would Nonconformity have been saved, but Europe might have been saved, and it would have fallen to the Church of Christ to lead the people to deliverance. If this had happened it would then have been profitable to discuss whether Nonconformity might not become more united, whether along its own lines of freedom and spirituality it might not adopt those practices and beliefs which keep Catholicism alive and have been so immensely strengthened by the war. It is our con-

fident belief that Nonconformity could evolve the truest Catholicism: mystical, not magical, sacraments, representative priesthood, and corporate possession of the keys of the Kingdom. There would have been a great deal of prejudice to fight against, a certain stubbornness of temper, a blindness to certain inalienable elements in a full religion and a rich worship, but it looked as if with patience these could be overcome. But now these things hardly seem worth fighting for. The Catholic Churches are now more likely to get reformed on Nonconformist lines than Nonconformist Churches are to get Catholicised: for it is almost certain that it will be the Catholic Churches which will break on the subject of the war first; the Pope's attitude and the National Mission are signs of that. We do not wish to shut out the possibility of a supernatural revival; but we cannot conceal the fact that as far as Nonconformity is concerned we have little human hope. It is a thousand pities; it may mean delaying the full Christianising of the Church, it may mean that for many a generation we shall have no choice between a crude faith and a crude unbelief, a rigid and mechanical Catholicism and a superficial and secular humanitarianism.

V

THE PERILS OF PACIFISM

THE war has presented us with a new word, "pacifist." It has been born in obscurity, hailed with contempt, branded as illegitimate. It ought to be "pacificist"; but we are in a hurry. The pacifist must give no occasion to the enemy to think that he is stuttering, and the enemy wants a word that can be uttered with short and contemptuous dismissal.

Now pacificism, or pacifism, as it has become, is simply the doctrine that one ought to make peace when one can; and with that few people in this mad world would disagree; with the exception of a few retired military men afflicted with dementia, and a few journalists who, in the endeavour to serve the demands of their employers and attract the notice of the public, have worked themselves into a state of perpetual delirium. But like most other doctrines nowadays the profession of pacifism contains little guidance for practical application. The best security for peace is efficient preparation for war; that has been the application of pacifist doctrine that the plain man has always patronised. And

this war has not shaken his faith in his deductions. For if only England had been better prepared there would have been no war. Germany would not have dared to spring her base designs upon the world, or risk a rupture with us. And after the war this deduction is to rule more thoroughly. We must be prepared to face any coalition against us. It may occur to a few of these persons, after a time, that this is an endless game, since other nations will be playing it too. Then there will be a movement towards a League of Nations to keep the peace by the threat that if one attempts war all the others will fall upon it. Whether such an idea is sound, or would not lead in the end to the same conditions as rule the world now, remains to be seen.

A more idealistic type of believer in peace as a desirable and possible thing thinks that we have only to win the present war and the chief obstacle to a world peace will be removed; until the Central Powers are beaten there can be no peace, and therefore the practical problem entirely depends upon our success in this war. This person believes that once the military power of Germany is broken the great lesson will have been learned not only by Germany, but by every other nation; this will never be attempted again. He does not seem to see that, on the accepted theory that Germany has made an unprovoked and wicked attack upon the peace of

Europe in order to seize the rulership of the world, there does not seem any reason why some other nation should not one day act in a similar manner. If it is sin that explains Germany's designs, then sin is a fairly universal phenomenon; if it is madness, you can never be sure that anyone will always remain sane.

But the person labelled "pacifist" to-day must be taken to be one who does not believe that preparations for war can ever secure peace or that war itself achieves any real benefit for humanity. He looks upon war itself as a madness, crime, or sin. This judgment upon war had been growing for half a century, and was beginning to attract the attention of thoughtful and religious people.

The writings of Tolstoy have had a wide circulation and have exerted considerable influence, partly because of the moral idealism and partly because of the intellectual force of his gigantic and arresting personality. Although Tolstoy uses the Gospels as the text-book for his doctrines, it is not on any infallibility of Jesus, or on the acceptance of the Christian faith concerning Him, that he bases his appeal. Jesus simply happens to have uttered the ultimate morality on this and kindred questions. The idea of non-resistance has been worked out by Tolstoy to its ultimate conclusions, and especially to a condemnation of all government by force; landing him eventually in a position of anarchic

communism. It is the attempt to govern others by force that has corrupted the heart of man. Tolstoy has convincingly set before the world in his books, pamphlets, short stories and novels the moral iniquity that is involved in compulsion; not only in the injustice done to the governed, but in the evil effects it has upon governors and in the general futility to which the whole system works out. What perhaps he has not shown is whether this is really due to compulsory government in itself or to the human frailty and sinfulness of governors. His literature is mainly critical in its effect, and he has left nothing to show that the mere cessation of government would solve the great human problem. But what Tolstoy has done is to make the world familiar with the idea that, for those who have any ethical consciousness at all, moral questions must take precedence over the mere preservation of social order. And everyone can see that the teaching of Jesus rests upon a similar principle and the tragedy which overtook His career was due to His fidelity to this principle. Those who hold that considerations of social order and public safety come first *must* agree with the policy of Caiaphas and approve the death of Jesus in the interests of good government and public welfare.

It may well be that Tolstoy is not a reliable commentator on the Gospels, and he is certainly far away from orthodox Christianity; but he has

forced us to look at the Sermon on the Mount again, which we had been reading so complacently; he has shown to multitudes that Jesus is the one teacher in history who still matters; and the issues he raises are not to be answered by saying that there is something else besides the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospels, or that Christ was more than a teacher. Anyone can see that it was the Sermon on the Mount that brought Jesus to Calvary, and that the dilemma presented to all successive ages is that the world has either to run itself on the lines of the Sermon on the Mount or crucify Christ and His followers. Tolstoy may be inadequate, and he could not himself carry out his own teaching, but he has sent thousands back to the Gospels, and has shown these documents, over which the Church had solemnly gone to sleep, to be alive with the most pointed attacks upon the whole basis of what was passing for Christian civilisation.

Whether it is due to Tolstoy or not, theology has been compelled during recent years to consider what Christianity means when applied to social order and international affairs. The idea that Jesus legislated on such matters no scholarship can allow; but there can also be no doubt that He did enunciate principles of religion which must be applied to the whole of life if we are going to escape His terrible denunciations against all hypocrites. No idea that He was really indifferent to questions of economics

or politics can live under the light of present Gospel study. What signs of indifference He displayed to particular points are only due to the fact that He was never content until He had penetrated to the root of the problem. This has been forced upon us slowly, it has had to make its way against valiant attempts to show that Jesus preached a purely inward religion or mystic indifferentism, but it is now becoming a universal admission that the teaching of Jesus does not sanction the existing order of economic competition or international warfare. He certainly preached indifference to those who were suffering under the evils of these systems; that is to say, He does not for one moment allow that you cannot enjoy the peace of God under the worst of conditions; but what He does show is that you cannot profess to be in contact with God and be the *author* of such conditions. It is quite a unique point of view, and we have not yet been able to express it in intellectual form or set it forth in our life. But any idea that Christianity can be confined to the inward or private life is now only defended by the hypocrites who want to make profits out of the present system and yet retain an inner peace now and reach heaven hereafter, or by those scribes who are suborned to bolster up the doctrine of the divine rights of the State. If the world is going to attempt Christianity it now knows what the conditions are; it must construct a new

social order, and it must find a better way of settling differences than by war.

The intolerable threat to which civilisation is exposed, the burden of ever vaster preparations for war entangling all peoples in a fatal web of suspicion, intrigue and panic, the interweaving of a diplomatic and military system which, touched at any point, will hurl destruction upon innocent and unoffending people, has become a shame and scandal from which mankind must be freed or all progress be abandoned. War involves moral degradation, not only because of the deeds it demands, for which man has to call up his savage and animal instincts, but because of the hate, trickery and false witness, without which it cannot be conducted; war dethrones reason and makes religion sheer hypocrisy. And the best thinkers of our times have done their best to devise schemes to banish this disgrace from the world; so far all in vain. It has at least begun to dawn upon Christian people that perhaps Christianity, here as elsewhere, holds the clue to the world's redemption. About the total opposition between Christ's teaching and the way of war, few thinkers, uncorrupted by the worship of the State, have now any doubt. The difficulty is how to apply the teaching of Christ to international affairs, how to give the principle by which He lived a national embodiment. Some may content themselves with creating the atmosphere in which war shall eventu-

ally perish, spreading abroad the knowledge of what Christ stood for, and showing how His cross was the solution He chose when this problem presented itself to Him; but sooner or later the pressure of circumstances, or some inner conviction, reveals that truth is spread quicker by example than by precept. Others may look for some diplomatic device or legislative measures to remove the main causes of war. But those who have entered most deeply into the spirit of Christianity, who have discovered that it is not only a unique message, but sets forth a unique way, begin to be aware that some closer following of Christ, which entails bearing the cross, may be the only way to save the world from this crime which so deeply stains the conscience of man. And so, before the war, quite respectable thinkers began to wonder if this nation was not called upon to abandon its defensive preparations and trust itself to the protection of God.[1] What the results of this might be hardly matters. It might be that the example would fire the imagination of humanity and start a new rivalry between the nations for adventure along these lines. It might be that some designing enemy would take the opportunity presented to seize our government and destroy our liberties, or that some barbarian people might utterly devastate our lands and put the defenceless pop-

[1] The Rev. William Temple, at the Liverpool Students' Conference, 1912. *See* "Christ and Human Need," p. 64. The Rev. Dr. Mackennal, Address to the Free Church Council, March 13th, 1900.

ulation to torture and the sword. This might prove the nation's Calvary, but it would effect the world's salvation and be followed by a glorious resurrection of the nation that was willing thus to suffer for the sins of the world. It is clear enough that this idea has come to stay, however long it may be before it is acted upon, and it may find a prophetic utterance which shall form the minds of men until the Redeemer-nation is born.

A third influence has been that of International Socialism. The idea that the proletariat of all nations are more closely bound together by their common interest than to their particular nation and government has been sown broadcast among the workers of the world. If they have enemies they are not to be reckoned among the wage-slaves of other nations, but in the capitalists and employing classes of their own. The doctrine has been advanced that all wars are economic in their origin, are engineered by the possessing classes for their own enrichment, paid for both in blood and taxation mainly by the working classes, and always entail their further degradation. Evidence is not wanting that sometimes astute rulers have welcomed war in order to divert the workers from their own sufferings and their dangerous aspirations; and, even where no such motive can be suspected, once a war is set going those in power seize the opportunity to cancel the hard-won liberties of the lower orders and

to get them to accept conditions which, after the cessation of war, will remain and keep them from revolt. In pursuance of these doctrines, Socialism was preaching the class war as the only war with which the workers should concern themselves, organising itself on an international basis, and was beginning to discuss the practical measure of declaring a general strike whenever war broke out; which would not only prevent it being waged, but would probably bring all the machinery of government into their hands. Some of the continental Socialists, fearful whether such a movement would really prove international when the strain came, refused to consider such a proposition, but it is evident that we are here faced with an idea that will grow and may one day be attempted; with what results remain to be seen.

All this pacifist opinion was sporadic, inchoate, held only by scattered individuals, and the war fell upon it with shattering effect. Individual moral convictions, the Church and the International, went down under the strain of a previously unconceived situation. For individuals the war presented the apparent dilemma, not between right and wrong, but between two kinds of wrong, one of which they were forced to choose. For us in this country there was not only the question of self-defence, but the question of the defence of a nation that was being ruthlessly crushed and of another which was being

seriously threatened. The best of men were torn between what they felt to be a personal sin for themselves, the slaying of their fellows, and standing by while they watched their fellows being slain. It seemed to the majority who thought the matter out that it was better to risk even one's soul than let someone else suffer. For institutions like the Church, which had never made up its mind on this subject, and the International, which had not perfected its organisation, nothing but a complete surrender or an absolute debacle was to be expected. Moreover, it is such an unprecedented war; whole nations are in it; there are literally no non-combatants; in some form or other, so absolutely is the national energy directed to one end, everyone is willy-nilly contributing towards its prosecution.

So some have gone to the battlefield clear that they have gone to sin against their most sacred convictions and do deeds that they know will have some awful result upon their souls, but with some sort of hope that this time the world has to be saved by sin. Many belonging to the Church and the International have gone further than this; they have confidently proclaimed that somehow this war is going to set up the International and establish Christianity. Some extraordinary somersaults have been performed both by Labour leaders and by Heads of Churches; some things have been said that, in all charity, can only be described as treachery to

the causes they represent; but it is perhaps fortunate that these two forces, which looked as if they were drifting into permanent alienation and hostility, have been tumbled into the dust together.

A few in all these classes have stood to their convictions, believing that circumstances do not make any difference to principles of this kind. The moral objectors to war in general have discovered many political arguments which show that their moral judgment has not misled them in their opposition to this war in particular. The repudiation of the idea that either Belgium or France constituted the cause of Britain entering the war,[1] the advocacy of seizing this opportunity to capture the enemy's trade, and the proposals for an economic war to follow the cessation of military hostilities, furnish the moral objector with quite sufficient support for his suspicions. The Socialist objector sees the war being used to pile up profits for the great combines and wealthy employers, to destroy the rights of trade unions, and to bring about the industrial slavery of his class. The religious objector finds a melancholy confirmation in the fading of all the original idealisms of the war, the disillusionment of the soldiers, the spread of vice, and the dying down of all religious inspiration.

For some this standing to their original convictions has only incurred the odium which is the

[1] *The Times*, Leading Article, March 18th, 1915.

reward of those who express unpopular opinions; but for many objection has involved them in dangerous resistance to the law of the land. With the characteristic compromise and bungling which seem to distinguish all our efforts at governing ourselves, exemption from military service was first granted in order to meet the case of those who had a conscientious objection to killing men or to taking any part in the waging of war, and then tribunals were set up which were certain to show themselves incapable of deciding what a conscience was, or would only delight in attempting to destroy it if ever such a faculty could be discovered. Although this provision for exemption has been made, the Tribunals have seen to it that very few exemptions have been allowed. Many cases have been allowed no exemption at all; the majority have been allowed exemption from combatant service only, and some have been allowed exemption on condition of obtaining work of national importance. If the whole thing were not so tragic, it would have provided one of the most comical interludes in our rough island story. Texts have been bandied about, an astonishing ignorance of the Bible, and even of the nationality of Jesus Christ, displayed, and, as we might have expected, hardly a glimmer of what Christianity means. A good deal of browbeating, sneering, and abuse has characterised many of the courts, and the "conscientious objector" has found

himself faced with all the hatred, fear and contempt which our kind generally metes out to those who think differently from the rest, or, indeed, set themselves to think at all. The effect of refusing exemption to some of these men has been to subject them to persecution of varying degrees; some of them know what it feels like to be under sentence of death, and hundreds have found themselves making an acquaintance with prison life. The general impression is that they are cowards, shirkers, lunatics and freaks, who have sheltered themselves under an unfortunate clause in the Military Service Act. Some have counselled deportation, others shooting, a great many disfranchisement.

Cowards very few of them can be. In many cases they have not only had to face bullying and torture, but what must have been far worse to bear, the hostility of their friends and relations, the jeers of their comrades or fellow disciples, the general contempt of the nation. Obstinate a good many of them may be. There are those who refuse to do anything simply because it is commanded them. Even where there is some sympathy for the position of those who refuse to take any part in killing, those who will not undertake work of national importance are looked upon as nothing but impossible persons for whom no kind of penalty is too hard. It does not seem to be recognised that

many of these, the most despised sect of objectors, care nothing at all for exemption, but only wish to protest against war with all the power that is left to them, and therefore will do nothing that helps its prosecution. They are no doubt dangerous persons—persons who, if they were left free to go about, would stop at nothing to bring the war to an end, whatever the results might be. Others detect in the alternative service that is offered them simply a means of organising the nation for war or for furthering industrial conscription. Some feel that the work on which they have been previously engaged is their vocation, which they will not surrender in order to do some task for which they are unfitted and to which they feel no call; but only the parson is allowed to have a vocation at this time. And it must be remembered that over the whole scheme of Work of National Importance there hangs the suspicion that the chief object is not to help the nation at all, but to penalise the objector; in its operation it is often reduced to a mere farce. Men are being taken from work which they can do, and which is of national importance, and put to work which is sometimes of less importance, and which they can only do very badly. Similar and other objections apply to Red Cross work under military organisation, which may not be openly stated at present.

It might be interesting to inquire who these

conscientious objectors are. By far the larger number are Quakers or Socialists, many of the latter professing no religion beyond their Socialism and some avowing themselves agnostics or atheists. Outside these there are Christians of all the main denominations, the Free Churchmen taken together far outbalancing the Anglicans and Catholics taken together; and there are considerable numbers from the Plymouth Brethren, the Particular Brethren, Christadelphians and Millennial Dawnists, and a few still more obscure sects which would be quite unknown to the general reader. It would be simple to assume that we have here nothing but the product of the sectarianism, freakishness and individualism which have run riot in this age. This would be unfair. Many of them are simple and sincere Christians who take their Bible very literally, and who can therefore cling to one text as a sufficient guide, even if others seem to contradict it. Others may be described as intellectuals, men with able and logical minds, who have been trained in our universities or in the various working men's educational movements. Some of them have arrived at their convictions by what can only be described as a profound interpretation of what Christianity fundamentally means. They are not all poor, uncultured, or unaccustomed to higher social life. But they are all out-and-outers, the uncompromising type, persons who cannot bear inconsistency or com-

promise, who take their faith seriously. That many of them have been through a great spiritual experience is obvious from their calm determination, their inward illumination and the religious joy that they have attained under persecution and imprisonment. Leaving out the atheist and agnostic section, the remainder, taken as a whole, are startingly like any collection that could have been made of the early Christians. They are mostly of the poorer and less educated classes, with here and there a man of real distinction and birth amongst them. Many of them are very literalistic in their Biblical views, especially on the subject of the Second Coming, but others hold quite advanced views on Biblical inspiration and interpretation. Most of them have no desire for martyrdom, and are just ordinary persons with plenty of common sense and humour; others are aflame with the desire to witness, in season and out of season, if needs be, by suffering and death. Many of them have not yet faced up to Nicene Christology, and yet a few base their whole position on the deepest conviction that Christ was God, the Word through whom the worlds were made, and that on the Cross there was revealed not some part of God, but the fullness of His power and wisdom. Many of them in their inner souls are humble and tender, but to magistrates they appear lacking in respect, and the superior man of affairs would simply characterise their attitude as "sheer obstinacy."

Any student of early Christianity, especially of the age of persecution under the Empire, will recognise the extraordinary likeness.

The whole position is inconceivable to the ordinary man of the world, to the ecclesiastic, to the type of apologist who thinks that Christianity must be tested by its complete common sense, its aid to getting on, its production of good citizens, and its manufacture of nice, reasonable people. Yet what has to be faced is that this type of person is going to be produced in ever larger numbers so long as civilisation rests on its present basis; that this war is manufacturing conscientious objectors every day that it continues; and that if the next war happens soon, many will be conscientious objectors then who are soldiers to-day.

These men have got hold of a principle, discovered by all religion under persecution, namely, that if men are willing to go on paying the ultimate price they can break down any tyranny or compulsion that is imposed upon them. For those who are willing to pay that price we have to look to the simple-minded, out-and-out person, who for other purposes may be considered undesirable and awkward; but liberty owes its existence to him.

The superior person ought also to remember that no new movement has ever disturbed the moral complacency of this world which has not been born to the accompaniment of jeers and mockery, in

which sometimes the leaders of the people and the rulers of the Church have joined. There is no movement which has ever benefited humanity that has not been hampered by those who, by faulty disposition, lack of learning, or mistaken action, have obscured to contemporaries its real value and significance.

The problem for these persons who are now bearing such reproach is whether they can build up as well as they can destroy. Anything can be brought to the ground by resistance; but it takes more than that to put up something better in its place. To the pacifist whom age, health, or the shape of his collar leaves free to find some other way, there falls the problem of considering the implications of his position. It must be admitted that pacifist philosophy breeds daily difficulties and creates a thousand perplexities. There are not only the well-worn questions of, "What would you have done on August the Fourth?" or "What would you do if a burglar . . .?" which no man can answer until he has actually been placed in those difficult positions; but there are also the questions of how far one ought to take part in the government, or the profits, or the general social conveniences of a society which is ordered on the present war basis. But the fact that the pacifist is driven to examine the basis of the present social order, to question our penal system, to suspect that our education is

all wrong, to investigate his own disposition, is no sign that he has landed himself in a cul-de-sac, but rather that he is out on the main road of progress. Happy are the people to whom this war has brought moral pain and mental perplexity. This is the sword and this is the fire that Christ came to cast on the earth.

What is to be feared is that the attitude of the Church, first to the war and then to the conscientious objectors who have been members of Churches, will promote the conviction that Churchless Christianity, a non-sacramental type of worship and an unorthodox type of belief, are the only foundations for pacifism. When it is seen that just where religion finds the richest outward expression it seems to lose inner guidance, and that it is precisely those who believe in the Deity of Christ and salvation by His Cross who believe that the world must be governed by compulsion and that the bloodshed of war washes away its sin, then it is only natural that pacifists should move farther and farther away from Catholic Christianity.

There may be far worse effects than this. If the pacifists want to unite in the future for any common action they must unite on a purely humanitarian basis; or if religion is allowed a place at all it will have to be of the most vague and nebulous type, if all are going to subscribe to it. The logic for many will be atheism. Where does one find

any clear insight into the utter futility of war; where does one find those who are willing to risk their all to stop war? Among atheists. The German Social Democrats are atheists almost to a man; and the same may be said of most Continental Socialists. The few men of outstanding public reputation in this country who have dared to criticise or oppose the war will hardly feel themselves hurt if their religious position is generally described as agnostic: men like Bernard Shaw, G. Lowes Dickinson, or Bertrand Russell. When one sees how the doctrine of immortality and "bright views of death" are used to enable us to submit to this daily murder of Europe's finest youth; how the fading ideals of war are recoloured with the blood of Christ; how false hopes of what war can accomplish are encouraged by pointing to the Cross; no one can be surprised if it comes to be thought that Christianity is the greatest obstacle to the deliverance of man from bewildering superstitions and misleading ideals. If for the moment the war has enabled men to accept again the doctrines of substitutionary sacrifice and redemption by blood, it is greatly to be feared that Christianity will have to pay heavily in reaction when the war is over. What men have felt about the doctrine of the Atonement for decades is that it is meaningless, and Christ's death unnecessary. The attempt to make the war an illustration of the necessity for the Cross

will only deepen that feeling when we look back to see how unnecessary this war was and how little it has accomplished for humanity.

Yet there are a few, of whom the writer must count himself as one, to whom the war has lit up Christianity to its very depths, renewed their faith in Christ as the absolute truth about God and man, shown that the way of His Cross is the only wisdom and the only effective power for the redemption of the world, and quickened the demand for that one Church of many members which shall be His Living Body here on earth. On all such there lies a heavy burden of perplexities to be solved and of implications to be explored, for which few will feel themselves equal; but it may also prove that obedience to the simple conviction that war is a sin in which they dare not take any voluntary share will lead to further light and point the next step which humanity must take to come nearer to God.

III.—THE HOPE OF THE AGE

I

THE RE-COMMENDATION OF CHRISTIANITY

THE one hope of the future is to get Christianity understood, accepted and embodied. But those who see that must realise the nature of the task that is before them. It is a task almost greater than that which faced the early apostles and missionaries of the Gospel when they determined to bring the Roman Empire to Christ. They were challenged by a pagan faith already in possession and not yet beyond capacity for putting forth fresh forms, as Mithraism in one direction and Neo-Platonism in another were to show. They had to overturn a social order which was based upon slavery and the denial of human rights to all save the noble and governing classes. They had to overcome the marvellously organised and ruthless power of a semi-deified State. We have to face conditions strikingly similar. Everyone who has studied the early centuries of our era has remarked upon the many features which our own age seems to reproduce. We have the same sort of conventional, officially recognised religion, a religion practised solely for its social advantages, maintained because of the

sanctity with which it invests the established order, but one out of which there has departed all sense of reality or personal claim. We have vast masses of our people without care or concern for any kind of religion; feeling that if it is true it has nothing whatever to do with them and no help to bring them. And we have swarms of new faiths and strange superstitions clamouring for recognition and competing for those dissatisfied alike with the received religion and with the general religious indifference. In the early days of the Roman Empire Oriental religions were being welcomed, the mystery cults were attracting myriads of worshippers, and the search for health was being identified with the search for God and truth; in our days we have exactly similar phenomena in the attempts to introduce Buddhistic doctrine to the West, in the revival of a pseudo-mysticism, and in the Christian Science movement.

Christianity had to compete in those early centuries with Mithraism, a religion which won extraordinary popularity with the army, and which for a time ran a neck-and-neck race for the conversion of the Empire, as its far-spread memorials, sometimes existing side by side with Christian shrines, remain to witness. And to-day we have to compete with a religion which exalts militarism and inspires the soldier. Christianity had to battle with the humanitarian philosophy known as Stoicism, which

definitely stood for many of the truths that Christianity only implied, such as the universal brotherhood of humanity; and its own witness was being continually confused by movements like Gnosticism, which made Christianity only one of the religious systems and reduced its faith to an esoteric knowledge about cosmological mysteries. Christianity to-day has to show itself superior to the purely secular socialisms, humanitarian pacifisms and ethical movements of our times, which often profess our applications more clearly than we do ourselves, and yet entirely deny the need of our faith on a theological basis; and it has to be disentangled from the maze and haze of the theosophical interpretations which seem to attract so many minds.

Here, we say, are the same conditions as faced the Apostles, but, unfortunately, with the addition of one circumstance that increases all the difficulties tenfold. The conventional religion that is still being practised, the religion which is taking up militarism, as the official religion of the Empire took up Mithraism, the religion which whole sections of the people have abandoned, is identified by name with the very religion that we want to propagate. When it is known that it is Christianity we are preaching we shall be met with the declaration that Christianity is obsolete, has failed, is the conventional religion of Imperialism. Especially when it is discovered that it is no new interpreta-

tion of Christianity that is being offered, no esoteric mystery, no diluted and dissected faith, but that which is both original and orthodox, that which is both primitive and the permanent heart of the historical development of Christianity; a Christianity that does not propose to get on without Christ, or the Cross, or the Church; then we shall find that we have to cut our way clean through dense misunderstanding, lead for consideration against minds closed against the very subject that we want to re-open, send a shaft of light through suffocating fogs of confusion.

If anyone is going to attempt to re-commend Christianity to our generation, he must first recognise the facts and the magnitude of the forces against him. The Church has been plodding on, barely holding its own, but comforting itself that there was a good deal of religious influence to which it could appeal and a general religious knowledge which it could assume; and all the time there has been growing up a population which is simply pagan without the culture or the gods of paganism. While guides who conceive themselves to be broad-minded have always been comforting us that outside the Church there is perhaps more genuine religion than inside, it has only needed this war to reveal that the ethic of Christianity has been as utterly repudiated as its theology, the very sentiment of Christianity, whose dregs we could once

find in our popular novels, melodramas and songs, completely drained away. And in this crisis the Church has been showing that war may be a Christian duty and patriotism is really religious; while all the time the methods which war has to adopt have been shedding every vestige of chivalry, honesty or humanity, and patriotism is settling itself more and more on a purely secular basis, its motives revealing themselves to be mainly commercial and its inspiration no longer love of one's country, but hate of one's enemies and fear for one's skin.

The prospect is depressing in the extreme. Nothing can relieve it but a second Pentecost, one of those great revivals of religion which lift the mass mind on to another level. But we must do something to assure our souls that this is not an impossible desire. A revival of religion cannot float itself into existence except on a basis of reality; even the fire of the Holy Ghost cannot fall upon us unless there is something for it to feed upon.

Now there are two elements in the situation which, when considered, are full of hope. We must recall what was the pre-war condition of thought on the subject of Christianity considered as a reasonable embodiment of truth. It is fair to sum up the situation broadly as follows. Science had withdrawn its veto against religion. We had been emancipated from the nightmare of a mechanical and deterministic universe, and the idea of free-

dom had been rehabilitated by physical scientists at work on their own subjects, who found that the mechanical scheme was neither a true explanation nor would work if it were. Psychologists were beginning to dare to speak of the soul, and to discover from the brain itself that man must be more than brain; while many of the discredited phenomena which have always been recorded as accompanying great religious movements were shown to be at least not impossible. The study of history on naturalistic lines, as of a series in which man was only an effect and not a cause, has had to be abandoned; and the economic interpretation of history was relieved of its deterministic colour by the discovery that economic laws were not something innate, eternal and automatic, but simply the laws which man makes. The inhibitive idea that we can only move safely when we move slowly, and that the realisation of all our great hopes for social reform and moral uplift must be postponed to a remote future, was broken up by the discovery that in biology life does sometimes leap forward with great strides, and that in history religious leaders have been able to lift mankind to sudden heights from which it never declines quite to the old level again.

Philosophy was beginning again to cast its vote on the side of Christianity, not, as formerly, with the patronising admission that Christianity was a crude and symbolical embodiment of the truth which

was to be found more truly expressed in great ideas and abstract generalisations. Truth was to be found in life and movement, of which thought is a mere symbol and rational ideas a static abstract. The only adequate expression of truth was a unified personality living a victorious life. These ideas had been fighting their way against the old philosophic systems, and have not yet reached their great constructive epoch; but it is easy to see which way they point. If truth is correspondence with ultimate reality, and personality is the only truth, then ultimate reality must be personal and the universe becomes a system of personal relationships. But that is what the Christian religion has always maintained, imagining God not only as personal, but as a perfect unity of personalities, and His only reflection here on earth a society built round a personality at once Human and Divine. If philosophy does not identify Jesus Christ as the truth, it at least tells us that it is no use looking anywhere else for the truth save in a perfect personality. The field is clear for Christianity.

And we have had a world example of what the alternative is. At present the conclusions to be drawn have not been realised, because with the one-sided view that military hostilities create and the fighting spirit has to adopt, we can see the example only in one nation, that of our enemy. This judgment is partial, uncharitable, but it has elements

of rough truth about it that are valuable, and only need applying all round to smite the modern world like the Day of Judgment. No one contended that Europe was getting more Christian, or that the modern mind is particularly strong in faith. It is out of such conditions that there has come this world-war of unprecedented barbarism and sordidness. If Christianity has failed to prevent it, no one would say that Christianity is the cause of it, because Christianity is conceded by all competent observers to be a very small influence to-day. It is generally admitted also that Germany has gone the farthest along the road of rationalism and in whittling down Christianity; and it is that country that has also gone the farthest in the direction of a *real-politik* which makes material considerations determinative, and in the direction of a State doctrine which completely rules out all moral, religious or Christian theories as inapplicable to this area. The State is an expression of force, and on that plane might is the only test of right.

The world has been horrified at these doctrines since they have been represented in the spectacle of Germany at war. But is there really any soul so simple as to think that these ideas have grown up only inside the artificial boundary of the German Empire or the State of Prussia; that they exist only inside the round, close-cropped Teutonic head which our caricatures represent to us as the German type?

Does there really exist any competent historian who does not recognise that this has been the general tendency of European statecraft for centuries? It may be true enough that other States would repudiate these doctrines, that our own politicians would avow other principles as actuating our international policy; but if it is tendency that is measured, or if it is the practical working out of policy that is considered, who can doubt for a moment that all States negotiate on a basis of *real-politik,* believe that when it comes to conflict between State and State there is nothing but force to decide? In effect, all countries adopt a doctrine of the State which means that they have to consider self-existence before Christian idealism and material welfare before moral considerations. What has been in the blood of Europe has come to a head in Germany; what has been the working hypothesis of all modern States is there frankly expressed and brutally followed. The difference that may be discerned between Germany and other countries may be traced to the greater retention of Christian ideas which, even if only done lip service to, do by that much affect policy. A conventional religion may exert some influence upon life; even a compromising Christianity does make some difference to character; the pious phrases of politicians are useful on occasion if only as reminders to themselves. The German says that when the English-

man says Christ he really means "cotton." That is not fair. He really thinks he means Christ *and* cotton in so far as they do not disagree, but even then he will not act just the same as if he had openly avowed that he meant only cotton.

What the war ought to reveal is that we are all travelling a certain path, and that Germany has got far ahead of the rest on the journey to the abyss, and the recognition of this ought to reveal that there is safety only in retracing our steps. What we have to fear at present is the after-effects of the now accepted idea that the only way to beat Germany is to be as much like her as possible. We have had a vast clamour going up that we shall carry out a system of reprisals and do unto Germany as she has done unto us. Bishops and Free Church leaders are horror-stricken. It never seems to occur to them that *war* is a reprisal, and that the doctrine, so widely sanctioned by the Church, that when an idea takes on an embodiment in material form there is nothing but force with which it can be met, really surrenders everything to those who demand that it shall be met by force used in the same way. The doctrine that when a State is at war it has the right to imprison a man for professing religious opinions that may hinder recruiting is our old friend the German doctrine of the supremacy of the State; only the enemy holds that in present conditions a nation is virtually always at war. One's

fear is that the acceptance of this doctrine may prove to be for more than the duration of the war. Indeed, a pessimist viewing the world to-day might be tempted to think that Germany had already conquered: she has compelled the world to fight with her weapons and to descend to her level.

What those persons who profess horror at Germany have got to ask themselves is, What is the alternative? If Germany is the antichrist, who is Christ in this business? *Punch* has produced its most famous cartoon in this war in which a picture is drawn of the Kaiser facing some wayside crucifix. It is called "The Two Ideals." But does the brilliant editor of *Punch* suggest that the Kaiser ought to have followed the way of Christ even if it meant the cross? He ought, of course; but he would have been the first monarch to do so.

Yet here is an illustration for all time, if the Christian preacher knew how to use it. This is what the repudiation of Christianity comes to. Here is the new religion which Professor Cramb prophesied that Germany would present to the world as a substitute for Christianity.[1] Here is what the doctrine that Christianity does not apply to State affairs ends in. If you do not like it, you must go the other way. And it has all come about, not perhaps of long-planned design, or as a diabolical plot against the world. Germany has had its fools

[1] "England and Germany." Cramb.

on its thrones and professorial platforms and editorial chairs; it has allowed its raving militarists to wander about loose; but there has been plenty of room for these people at the top everywhere in the modern world. It is a clique of madmen in every country that have driven Europe to this. But what has given them their chance is the diffusion of a compromised Christianity. Once you admit that Christianity sanctions war and Christ has no application to State affairs, then Christianity has no real remedy for war at all. If you cannot trust yourself to God and follow Christ's way, then you must prepare for war, and for any kind of war; you must watch your enemies, you must spy out their defences, you must invent new devilries, and when trouble is brewing you must be prepared to strike first and strike hard; all else is weakness. The logic of hell? Certainly! But it is logic; and the only alternative must be as logical in the other direction.

Here, then, is the chance to commend Christianity to mankind, for it is in the light of a crisis like the present that we can at last see what Christianity stands for. It stands for the absoluteness of Christ. This in the past has been presented as a purely theological issue and in terms which have proved either meaningless or a source of misunderstanding.

It may be that in essence we are fighting over again the issue that was decided at Nicæa, that

we are fighting for the "Homoousian";[1] yet it will hardly do to go to the world with a word like that on our banner. But we are clearly faced with the practical issue whether Christ is the ultimate truth for this life, the truth about God and ourselves; and whether the way He took reveals the Divine wisdom and sets forth the supreme power on which we have to depend. I have no doubt myself that to secure these things intellectually you have to confess that Christ and God are one in its deepest philosophical, theological and ethical connotation. But we have to face the fact that there are many Unitarians and Liberal Christians whose attitude towards Christ, especially at this time, does make Him absolute over every sphere of life, and yet who find difficulty with Nicene terms; while there are millions who would accept those terms and thousands who would die for them who do not, in effect, allow that Christ is supreme over life. If the Unitarians who take this position are lacking in logic, as I think they are, many who accept the Nicene position are lacking in life, which is much more serious. But it is clear, now, that if Christ is not absolute He is of no use to us. At crises like this we have to come down to what we believe is real, is life, is power. If there is something other than or outside Christ, even if it is supposed to be something bigger or

[1] Hutton's "Ancestral Voices," p. 14.

better, that something can get dressed up in the garb of the devil. You can see this in those orthodox theologians who are arguing that Christ is the incarnation of only a part of God, namely, His tender, redemptive and loving side; while beside this there is wrath and vengeance and destruction. One need not point out to professional theologians that this is what is rightly called a damnable heresy; it is "dividing the substance," for it maintains that there are different characteristics in God and that only some of these are resident in the Person of the Son.

What we have to seek for are terms more vital, more ethical and more personal than those which Nicæa used, for they are metaphysical and are capable of being materialised. What we have to make clear to men is that Jesus Christ, a real human being who lived a real human life, who bore the whole burden of our nature and faced the whole problem of our existence, was the revelation of what God essentially is; that this human embodiment in Jesus tells us all about God and His purposes; why He made the world, and how He made it, and what He means by it; tells us all about ourselves, how we are to live and how we are to understand life. And in this revelation there was nothing second-hand, merely copied, diminished, or adapted so as to suit the body of our humiliation and the conditions of humanity; but that this Jesus reveals the

wisdom, the glory, the whole nature and very self of God; and this life of ours, this flesh we wear, and all the conditions that are inseparable from humanity, were actually designed so that God should in them be Himself and here show forth His glory.

I hold that nothing short of Nicene Christology secures and preserves and justifies this whole way of thinking, however inadequate or confusing its terms may have become; and that if we are going to proceed to a more adequate statement on intellectual lines we shall have to go higher than Nicæa, not lower, so as to remove any suspicion that the whole Godhead was not constitutive of the personality of Jesus and revealed in His life. For this crisis has revealed that the Nicene statement can be juggled with and turned into a denial of the real and proper Deity of Christ. But a more exact theological statement is not the thing that matters most at the moment. What we have to set before all people is that the full faith in Christ is the only faith that can save the world now, and if it is to be faith, and not merely a theological idea, it must be an encouragement to venture all upon Christ's absolute reality and power.

Faith in Christ entails a perfect combination of intellectual conviction, voluntary choice and sense of final certainty. Men cannot accept what appears to be intellectually nonsense; theological conviction does not necessarily move the heart; there is a sort

of pragmatic choice which brings no sense of security. When a man chooses Christ he has to do so on the absolute basis that Christ is what he means by truth, and that Christ's career is what he calls success.

We have got to set forth His cross to men as the great turning-point of history, where the life of God in the soul of man came to a reconciliation and unity never again to be broken up, and never to fail of its power until it has made all mankind one and reconciled every soul to God. In man as man, Christ accepted the life and way of God at the ultimate price; and, in the human life of Christ, God showed that He was God, not by virtue of position, or by nature only, but by the power of love able to make His glory seen through earthly shame, and to win a spiritual kingdom far more wonderful than any predestined or natural reign that would have belonged to Him by Divine right. In the cross we see God capable of any sacrifice and risking all for love of man.

For its action on individuals, that cross works, not by external transaction, the benefits of which are transferred to the individual on his accepting the arrangement, but by begetting its own principle in the soul. The cross, to those who are brought by faith before it, first breaks up the personality by showing that the ends for which we have lived, and the things which we have loved,

would inevitably lead us to crucify the Lord of glory; and then what it breaks through pain it builds again through love. The vision of what the cross means, God's love risking all to save us from moral destruction, makes known in a flash that we are forgiven, for, unless we were, that love would not have dared so much; but the building up of the personality around the new centre may take a lifetime spent before the cross, until it accomplishes eternal death for the old man and endless life for the new.

Then the cross goes on to destroy the attraction of the present world-order. We see that Christ was led to His cross by a combination of the highest religious and moral attainments that the world had then reached. Jesus was put to death by the religious convictions, the social justice and the popular aspirations of His times: the Pharisees, the judicial authorities and the mob agreed that He must be got out of the way. His religious claims were condemned as impious and blasphemous; His claims to power were held to threaten the Imperial rule and the safety of society; His way of reforming the world was discerned by the zealots and the social reformers to go too deep, and to demand motives that they were unprepared to adopt. Place Jesus Christ anywhere in history since, and He would have secured against Himself a coalition of the Church, the State,

and Labour. It is especially ominous that these three bodies should be agreed together again to-day; when it happened before, it was because they were agreed that Christ was impossible.

And yet that cross *is* breaking down the world-order. It has really broken the power of the State long ago for all who are willing to bear the cross rather than worship Cæsar. It has yet to break down the world-order in so far as it has enshrined itself within the Church: the Church's trust in, sanction of, and bid for world-power. It has yet to show Labour that neither legislation nor forceful revolution is its solution.

But one of the great aims of the cross, which has never even attracted the notice of theologians, is that which St. Paul suggests in the Epistle to the Ephesians: the breaking down of the barriers of hostility between race and race, sex and sex, nation and nation.[1] How this is to work has never been set forth or discussed, but surely we are now beginning to understand. If it could dawn upon Europe that the real meaning of this war was the crucifying of Christ, that He was suffering in His divided Church and in the broken humanity which is His body, then there might come a repentance and a reconciliation which nothing else could accomplish, and so lead to the ending of war, the abolition of all barriers and the passing of ancient

[1] Eph. ii.14-18.

hostilities. That is perhaps the great meaning of the cross for our age. For an earlier generation the cross was a redemptive act whereby God and man were reconciled; and so it is, but the cross of Calvary was such an act only because it contained within itself the infinite potentialities which history is slowly revealing. Then for a later generation it came to be conceived as the moral power for reforming personal character. For us it must be the overthrowing of barriers and the reconstruction of a new order of social and international life.

All these things must be set before men; again, not as mere doctrines, though the closer we keep to the great historical interpretations of the cross the easier we shall find it to press all its applications. We can now see, for instance, how mere subjective views of the cross, which make its efficiency entirely dependent upon our imitation, have misled us into identifying the way of war with the way of the cross, which any due appreciation of the old evangelical doctrine of the cross would have prevented.

If we are going to preach the cross to our generation, it must be preached by men who not only see its present application but set forth that cross in the life they are living, bearing in their bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus: men who have obviously been crucified with Christ. That will make the meaning of the atonement clear and

set the cross vividly before men's eyes. If He is lifted up again, all men will be drawn to Him. They will be best able to bring the world face to face with the cross who have themselves evidently been broken up and recreated by the cross and are prepared to venture their own lives on the same principle for the love of man.

All this means that we have to bring our generation back to a religion that it has lightly rejected or unconsciously betrayed. We have arrayed against us now, not so much the philosophers and the scientists, but the secondhand opinion of the very popular and imperfectly understood science of a generation ago. These opinions are still being popularised by superficial writers and especially by superficial preachers, who, because they have just discovered Emerson, think that they are up to date. In fact we have to move that mass of opinion which likes to think that it is progressive and broad, and will hardly give us the patience to listen to what seems like an attempt to rehabilitate obsolete ideas. And to confine the revelation of God to Christ, or salvation to His cross, will seem to them intolerably narrow. Some expect help from a certain shifting back to orthodoxy which the war is expected to compel; but we must be perfectly clear that a movement of this kind is going to be no real help at all. The orthodoxy of the past was too often

an uncritical acceptance of certain doctrines on authority, which were therefore never even understood, and its rigid outlines were welcome to those who do not want to think for themselves, or who sought some sanction for hardening their hearts against all who could not pronounce their shibboleths.

We have to show the broad-minded that it is only as you have a revelation of God in Christ that is absolute that we have any focus of the light that lighteth every man; that only as we make Him the centre from which we describe our circumference can we make that circle wide enough to include all humanity. Interpreted by Christ there is an honourable place for all the great world religions; without Him they become so many meaningless and contradictory guesses; for it is in Christ alone that one can gather any valuable suggestion from what these other religions were striving to express. The general idea of the incarnation of God in humanity is useless, unless we know what it is that is seeking incarnation, and that can be disclosed, not in a long and varied process, but only in one who was a full personal incarnation of God. We can believe that there is a light which lighteth every man, which is the light of all his seeing; but if we are simply to take even the sincerest interpretations of that light and add them together, it is obvious that we shall get

nothing but confusion, and indeed come to regard the whole idea not only as without guidance but as even dangerous. But if Jesus Christ is the light which dwells in every man, it at once becomes possible to understand what it is that any disciple of the inner light is striving to follow. The power of Christ to illumine the meaning of other religions is only just beginning to be recognised, many who are recommending the ancient faiths as religions suitable for the modern world being apparently not aware that their present attraction is due to their reinterpretation in the light of Christianity. The power of Christ to find for thousands their own inner light is the proof that the two are really one. The higher we make our interpretation of Christ, the more meaning He has for the whole of humanity, and the clearer we conceive Him the more easily we can find our way through Him to every heart.

It is in the conscious acknowledgment of Christ as redeeming our souls upon the cross that human personality reaches inner reconciliation and starts upon a perpetual progress; but this does not mean that the soul who cannot make this confession or has not yet attained this experience is thereby outside the saving power of the cross. We must believe that God's love for every soul, the cost He is prepared to pay, and the way He takes to win the soul are set forth in the cross, and the

conviction that this is God's supreme and only way gives hope and assurance for all the lost and striving souls of men. Love like that cannot grow tired, or shrink from any adventure in order to attain its object. It is on the eternal love that there breaks visibly into our life that all redemption depends. No soul has ever been saved, no soul has ever moved nearer the light, nay, no soul has ever been brought into existence, save by the love that is there revealed. The ancient clause of the Apostles' Creed, "He descended into hell," becomes endowed with a new meaning when we understand it to signify that no hell into which man may fall places him beyond the compassion and power of that tireless and unflinching love.

We must show the followers of all the fashionable cults of our times that we have some sympathy with what they are seeking, that it is to be found in catholic Christianity, and that *we* are to blame that they have had to seek these things outside what they thought was only a narrow faith. It is not enough to condemn these new faiths; we must show how infinitely better they are served in the majestic balance of the whole Christian faith. If we stand fast for the faith once for all delivered to the saints, there must be purged away from that position the least suspicion of harshness and intolerance which has given the false impression that the faith itself is a hard and inhuman thing; we

stand for it, because nowhere else is there to be found that which holds so much for the world, can minister to the needs of human nature, or contains so glorious a hope for every soul.

It will not be enough to declare that a secular humanitarianism gives absolutely no basis of hope for the aspirations of socialists, pacifists and reformers. There is, no doubt, much to indicate to empirical observation that this world is incapable of justice and that anything like equality is impossible. Only in a world whose basis is spirit, whose origin was due to love, and where every soul by its constitution has some contact with a higher nature, have social aspirations any hope of realisation. Nothing but the full Christian faith in the Eternal Godhead and Sovereignty of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost is really equal to those hopes. But no one will be impressed by these declarations, unless it can also be shown that Christianity creates a conscience progressively alive to the evils that we have hitherto had to wait for outsiders to bring to our attention, and can actually accomplish the result for which we say these other forces will only labour after in vain. If the Church could put an end to war and actually bring into existence a Christian order of society there would be little further need for the science of apologetics or Christian Evidence Societies. When Christianity has to defend itself it is not only a sign that someone

outside has been denying the faith, but also that someone inside has been betraying it. Christ may be the whole and final truth, the cross the one hope of the world, and the acceptance of the Christian faith the most immediate need before this generation; but this will dawn upon men very slowly if the Christian Church remains in its present condition and Christian people do such disservice to their faith by the life they live and are willing to tolerate around them. Therefore we must recognise that nothing but a reformed Church can hope to re-commend the Christian faith, and there lies the next problem to be considered.

II

A NEW CHRISTIAN PROPAGANDA

SOMETHING of what the need of the world is, and of the task that must be undertaken if it is to be met, now lies clear before us. Christianity must be published to the whole world and republished to Christendom with speed and insistency. Everything is at stake. We are standing at the parting of the ways. There has been no crisis for the history of humanity to equal this since God offered Himself in Christ to be the world's redeemer and was rejected by the nation that had been trained to prepare His way to the throne of the world. For Christ is again offering Himself for the world's acceptance. In the anguish of the hour, when kingdoms are rocking to their base, the social structure of modern civilisation is strained to the breaking-point and all hearts are full of fear, it may be left only to a few to recognise that this is the coming of the Son of Man on the clouds of heaven. All that many see at the moment is the clouds, for they have forgotten that this was to be the sign of His coming. The stars by which they have steered are blotted out, the horizon is everywhere

threatening, hope is fading; that is all that most serious men can see. In reality it is the Lord thundering at the gates; but the Church, who was appointed to be the porter and commanded to watch, has been drinking with the drunken and now slumbers at her post; even she has not yet discerned that the author of this crisis is her Lord who, at His great rejection, took over the dictatorship of history and taught us to see in every human catastrophe the sign of His coming.

The recent revival of scholarly interest in apocalyptic has fortunately prepared us for a deeper interpretation of what is called the Second Coming of our Lord. We have moved away from that detailed and diagrammatic literalism which once beset this subject and brought the whole idea into contempt; we have got past the proposals to regard the apocalyptic elements in the Gospels as interpolations or misunderstandings of Christ's teaching; and we have perhaps come to the end of the equally weak device of regarding His language as due to an obsolete philosophy of apocalyptic which we have to disregard, and His ideas as rather fantastic symbols of purely inner changes which we must thoroughly spiritualise before we can apply them to actual history. The general view of the progress of history and the advance of man, which made Christ's outlook seem fevered and out of relation to the facts and forces of the universe, has

been swept aside by closer observation of what actually happens. The penultimate modern view of history as a slow and steady march of life which knows no set-back, but advances by infinitesimal and inevitable stages towards some end already implicit in the organism, is now recognised to be an illegitimate application to history of immature biological science. The development of life has not always been slow, steady and straightforward; experiments have been made which have ended in disaster or have reached a false goal. A great deal of freedom seems to be allowed even to non-conscious life to direct its own way, only certain paths being blocked and the true path alone always left open. When life makes a mistake it has to back to the juncture where it went wrong, and then we may see a sudden leap forward along the right path. So it is in history. Human society develops along certain lines, and may reach a great height of perfection; but there it stops, and no further advance is possible. Along other lines it comes to swift decline and sudden disaster. History is strewn with wrecked civilisations; again and again society has been put back and started again on a simpler level. On the other hand, the emergence of great leaders or the synthesis of certain elements of thought give enormous lifts to humanity, and accomplish in a day what centuries could not reach.

The recognition that apocalyptic dominates the

outlook of Christ shows that His teaching falls into line with this modern idea of progress. He looks forward to history developing in a series of crises. The leaven is hidden in the lump, the seed is sown in secret, the great summertime of opportunity may be preceded by the gentle and unobtrusive signs of spring; but suddenly the whole mass of humanity swells and heaves with the hidden ferment, the sickle must be thrust in because the harvest is ripe, the age reaches its vintage and the grapes are trodden in the press. That is how matters appear to those who know the signs and remain on the watch. But to others the great days of history flash like sudden lightning across the sky, the great opportunities come and go like a thief in the night. This means that to every age there is a consummation and a judgment; but that with every judgment there is also the offer of opportunity. The clouds break and the Son of man is seen seated at the right hand of power and ready to come in glory. Of all these events Christ regarded Himself as the supreme author. It is a very personal reading of history, and it means a stupendous claim for Christ, but philosophy, with its modern estimate of personality as the supreme factor, cannot forbid consideration of the idea; there is no better clue to history, and we know now that this is what Jesus was claiming to be every time He called Himself the Son of man.

There are many who do regard the hour as one of the great judgment days of the world. They feel that so stupendous a catastrophe cannot be wholly due to the will of one man or the treachery of one nation. They look round for deeper moral causes. Unfortunately they move with great uncertainty in an area where freaks and false prophets have long occupied the ground, and they put forward the most ridiculous interpretations of why God is thus punishing humanity. It is Sabbath Desecration, Ritualism, the neglect of reverence to our Lady, the Welsh Church Act; or it is Impurity, Intemperance and Gambling. All this proceeds on the assumption that the judgments of God have to be imposed in a quite external and unrelated way, and with no recognition of the principle that the punishment should fit the crime; in fact, with no discernment that God's judgments always spring out of the sin itself and are never due to explosions of vengeance or the infliction of arbitrary suffering. The catastrophe that has befallen Europe is the natural and inevitable outcome of the philosophy that has come to rule the modern mind and the life that we have set before us as the goal of our ambitions. This is what the materialistic estimate of life and the trust in might always lead to. Yet even if some have been enabled to discern this they still propose that the one way to save us from this disaster is a temporary trust in the

very things that have brought it upon us: force and material might.

It is, however, far more important that we should all come to discern that behind this judgment stands the Son of man offering once again His oft-rejected way. If we could get men to lift their heads above the strife they would see that once again redemption draws nigh, and they might stretch their hands to grasp what is offered to them.

This, then, is the nature of the crisis. It is not political or economic in its ultimate essence; it is due to the drawing near of Christ. The message that wants ringing round the world again is, "The Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the good news." How can that be done?

We ought, before inquiring after new methods of evangelisation, to recognise what the world owes to those methods that have been already tried. The attempt to evangelise the world, the whole motive and method of what are called Foreign Missions, are regarded by the average man of the world, and unfortunately by many professing Christians, as mistaken, fantastic and a waste of energy. It may be admitted that in the early stages of modern Missions the motive was often inadequate, that some of the missionaries were unenlightened and some of the methods short-sighted. But the Foreign Missionary enterprise is a self-educating and self-reforming enterprise; and the

devotion which often underlay admittedly crude presentations of Christianity and an imperfect understanding of how Christianity ought to be related to the other world-religions nevertheless did not fail of its reward. For the Spirit of God is not entirely dependent upon the instrument that He has to use. No one who is conversant with the subject of Foreign Missions can fail to recognise that this has been the most hopeful enterprise of Christian history, has proved the universal mission of Christianity beyond all doubt, and has already laid the whole world under an obligation that is at last beginning to be realised by competent and thoughtful observers. Indeed, the Missionary enterprise is the one indisputably Christian flag flying at present; it is the only answer that the Church can make to a world at war. Here is our substitute for the way of war actually at work; here is the "other way" which we are being challenged to show. To go forth to uncivilised or hostile peoples with no force behind one but the love of God, and no wages asked but to share the suffering of Christ, is the real redemptive enterprise. It is beginning to dawn upon some people that Christian Missions are really acting as a leaven in the Eastern world, for instance, and that whether the East shall become Christian is a matter that vitally concerns every nation and must determine the future of humanity. If the East with its swarming

millions should ever learn our civilisation on its industrial and military side only, while it abandons its ancient religions and ethic—both of which are happening before our eyes—the supremacy and even the safety of the West is more than threatened. We have seen what can happen to our semi-Christianised civilisation; but what a purely atheistic civilisation could be, we can perhaps now begin to imagine.

Or if, as is also possible, the West finally rejects Christianity, and Europe goes on its chosen way of self-destruction, then we have to be thankful that this once-despised enterprise has already provided some guarantee that if the light goes out here it shall have been first handed on where it may burn far brighter. Throughout our era Christianity has always been on the move, ever saving itself from decline only by being transplanted to some virgin soil; as if it must first seek some embodiment not yet obtained before it can conquer the whole world. We can discern many points in which the East may be more naturally disposed to elements in the Christian faith that have never been understood by the Western world. There is less natural concern among Hindus, for instance, to make material possession the one essential for happiness, and among the Chinese, for instance, to make military exploits the end of national existence.

What we may conclude from this success of

Foreign Missions for the further propaganda of Christianity is full of hope. Here we see what can be done by an enterprise badly supported by the Church as a whole and started by a handful of not always the most enlightened type of Christians. Barbarism can be educated, savagery transformed, vast populations penetrated by the Christian principle, and the hope of the Christianisation of the entire world shown to be no wild and empty dream. If any Christian is perplexed by the present situation to such an extent that he cannot see where to look for hope or where to lend his support, here is one enterprise that marks a clear way out towards the greater future. And perhaps, despite all the confusion of the Church, we may still unite on this one duty of carrying the Gospel to all the world as soon as possible. This crisis which has come upon the world will not leave that message, even as it is conveyed to the pagan and the heathen world, without some change, at least of emphasis. The Eastern nations must be shown most clearly what the issues in the Western world really are. There are dangers here of which it is to be hoped that missionaries abroad and Missionary Societies at home will be sufficiently alive to. The war may give just that wrong turn to Foreign Missionary enterprise which will corrupt its motives and in the end bring all its activities to nought. There will be a natural desire to represent the great

struggle in the West in terms most favourable to ourselves; as fighting on the side of the Kingdom of God, while the enemy is fighting for the devil. This is a partial and superficial interpretation, and it will only discredit in the end those who employ it. From all accounts many intelligent pagans have already formed a very different conception of what is happening. There is only one explanation that I would commend to our honoured missionary brethren as at all safe or worthy: this war is the judgment of God on the Western world, its last great opportunity to appropriate the Gospel, and the real issues of the war are between the Kingdom of Christ and a secularised civilisation. On the whole, we can leave our missionaries on the field to the wider judgment which their work naturally begets. A more serious warning must be addressed to missionary societies at the home base, which are inclined to play up to the patriotic motive as a possible aid in gaining the support of our semi-pagan hordes at home for this most Christian enterprise. One sometimes meets with the suggestion that since India has done so much for the Empire we ought to spend more on her evangelisation; it is the least return that we can make. Surely everyone can see that these arguments may lead to a disastrous confusion. Let it once be understood that Missions are a part of some Imperial scheme, and they may for a time win support from those

who would fail to be touched by the appeal to Christian motives, but the end will be unrelieved catastrophe. We fancy that we have sometimes detected about the expressed motive of some German missionaries a touch of the commercial and imperial concern, and the "yellow peril" has been openly urged as a motive for which the Christianisation of the East should be undertaken. This may be doing an injustice to the real motive that has made Germany our great ally in the past in this matter; but whether it is or not, let us keep as far away from this unholy taint as possible. There may be something in the threat of the yellow peril, but we are certain that it is not a sound appeal to urge the evangelisation of the East in order to save the West from a catastrophe that, as a matter of fact, it richly deserves for presenting the East with such a perversion of what Christianity means. We send the Gospel eastwards not only because we are certain that the East needs Christ, but also because we are beginning to feel that we shall never get a full vision of Christ or a world view of Christianity until the East has brought its contribution both to our thought and practice of the Christian faith.

But while we must see to it that nothing allows Foreign Missionary enterprise to suffer at this time, there is another problem of even greater dimensions, namely, that of *re*-evangelising Europe.

This compromised Christianity must go, and at present it seems as if Christianity will be abandoned rather than its full application be attempted. How are we going to bring home to our Western civilisation what Christianity means, and show that all our troubles and this latest disaster come from our semi-paganism and our divided allegiance? Moreover, think of the vast masses of people all over Europe to whom Christianity means simply nothing more than an effete superstition or a harmless hobby of no importance whatsoever. Think of our intellectuals playing about with strange fire and mad ideas and lending their genius to the confusing, and corrupting, and misleading of our half-educated classes. Think of our official classes paying conventional court to Christianity, and all the time worshipping prestige and world power and all the other national idols that have brought us to this hour. One's mind is almost paralysed, and faith can only put forth faint ideals of what ought to be done to meet the situation.

Yet we ought not to be dismayed at the prospect. We have to our hand means that were not open to Boniface, Francis, or Wesley. Modern travel makes anywhere in Europe only a week away. The diffusion of thought made possible by cheap printing multiplies a millionfold those whom the voice could reach. What would earlier evangelists have given for such opportunities! Yet with the

extension of external means we ourselves seem to have shrunken inwardly, our minds lacking light and our spirits venture. One dreams of bands of young men pushing right through Europe after the war with the challenge of the Kingdom, offering the choice of God or mammon, Christ or Cæsar, the Cross or the sword. One longs for some mighty intellect and saintly genius who could pour forth pamphlets, tracts and books which would arrest the mind of the age with the forceful commendation of Christianity. We want the early ideals of the Franciscan, the Dominican and the Jesuit orders recovered, purified and fused together: riches, intellect and obedience laid at the feet of Christ. Of such things we can only play the prophet and hope to bring to birth the man for the hour by our inspirations and our prayers. The true method of evangelisation will probably have to be quite new, and until it is found to be suddenly at work no one will be able to predict what form it will take. If only some of the genius, devotion, and sacrifice that was given to the militant Suffrage movement could be devoted to Christian propaganda, we might see women discovering the new and more effective way. They have suffered in this hour and will be left alive to tell the tale. But we cannot see ahead, and it is idle to speculate upon details; yet neither need we sit still with folded hands.

We know that all revivals of religion have been connected with some great name, but that must not delude us into thinking that the great name was the cause of the movement. The slightest investigation will show that it was simply that some absolutely single-minded personality passed through the typical experience of the age and so could set before men what it was they were groping after. And we know that we need not simply wait for the appearance of the great personality, however essential he may be. All these movements found a prepared soil. The people of God had been everywhere groaning under the evils of the hour, feeling the perplexities of the situation, bemoaning the falling away, and crying for the deliverer. If only we could get men to feel how wrong things are, if only the anguish of the hour was not making too many of us callous to pain and blind with grief, this time of travail might end in the bringing forth of a redeemer. But the people are still crying out for some mighty conqueror who shall deliver them from their enemies, looking for a dictator who will shoulder their responsibilities and bring order out of the chaos they have made; they are not yet praying for one who will bring deliverance to all peoples by calling man back again to God. The true prophet and leader must be virgin born, that is, he must be born of pure desire, humanity yielding itself to God's purposes

and solely to fulfil His will. It is therefore from the womb of the Betrothed of Christ, the Church of God, that the true man must issue. And it is just this that brings us face to face with our greatest difficulties. It is to the Church that we must look for that outburst of evangelistic zeal, for the production of the religious leader, for the new race of preachers, or for whatever form the new religious movement is to take; and we might do so with confidence if only her adultery with the world had not given her a miscarrying womb and dry breasts. Without the fellowship that creates the prophet and the prayer that ordains him, we shall get no one who will come forth from the presence of God and strike home to the heart of the people. "How shall they preach except they be sent?" All this means in plain language that we can expect no revival of religion such as is the world's one hope, no propaganda of the faith until the Church is right with her Lord and has come to clearer understanding of the faith to which she is committed.

Before the Church can teach she must learn; before she can learn she must listen; and this means that we must call the Church first of all to a work of self-education in the mind of Christ.

No one can deny that, taken as a whole, Christian people do not know to what their faith commits them. The lack of understanding and grip

of the fundamental realities of their faith is everywhere noticed and deplored. We have the catholic type, with the dogmas all learned off by heart, and the sacramental means of grace faithfully observed, but apparently with little idea how these things are to be applied to their common life in the world. We have the liberal type, intent upon applications of the faith, certain that Christianity is a matter of character and conduct, yet for lack of anchorage to principles getting hopelessly at sea, losing all sense of a special vocation in the world, and at last settling down to the ethic of being agreeable, reliable and kind as the all-sufficient confession of Christianity. The conditions everywhere show that the Church is not instructing her children. This is partly due to the great division between Catholic and Protestant, which has developed opposed and one-sided methods. The sacramental system provides an opportunity for mystical contact, but it often leaves out of account both the need for clear intellectual comprehension of God and consistent expression in daily life. If any teaching accompanies the sacramental system, it is generally negative and trivial; one must abstain from sexual sin *and* not go to dissenting places of worship; one must not steal *and* must be sure to abstain from meat on Fridays. But it is equally certain that the pulpit system of Protestantism also fails to instruct. If the pulpit

deals with the application of Christianity to public and social life it tends to merge its message into recommending schemes of legislation or the support of political parties, while the need for feeding the soul with worship and communion gets overlooked. In practice the pulpit has to confine itself to inspiration, and that comes down in the end to providing warm comforts for the soul and emotional uplifts; which again hide the demand for a mental grasp of Christian principles and a life expression of the faith. It would probably make a great difference if the sacramental and the preaching system could be reconciled; but even this union would not entirely meet the need. Preaching must always run largely to exhortation; but it is impossible to exhort people to any purpose unless one can assume some understanding both of principles and duty. The pulpit cannot be made into a proper educational force, because the day has gone by when people will consent to any form of instruction where they have to remain entirely passive and silent. If we do have in our Churches those who are still children in the faith, we must remember that they are grown up in other respects; and when we attempt to instruct from the pulpit we are not giving the people even the opportunity we allow to a Sunday-school class. Self-education, if it is properly guided, is the only kind of education that really builds up a true knowledge, and nowhere is

that more so than in religion. What is therefore wanted in all Churches is a system of Christian self-education. We have become convinced about the need of education in the universal acceptance of the Sunday-school system and in the revolution in its methods which have recently been attempted. But we really need to turn the whole Church into a Sunday school, with such adaptations as would be necessary for adults. What is wanted is a class system something like that provided by the Adult School, where a systematic scheme of study is followed and the freest discussion is allowed. There are three branches of study obviously needed: Biblical, Theological, and Sociological. But for better efficiency we need to combine the discussion-class system with the tutorial system. The classes need to be presided over by trained leaders who are authorities on their subjects. That seems to make an impossible demand, for in a Church of any size we should have to secure a large number of such leaders. But this would not be impossible if, connected with every large Church, or with a group of small Churches, there was a real expert who was set apart to organise this educational work. He could train the class leaders in their subjects, receive their reports of the difficulties that had emerged, or the type of thought that was found to prevail, and so would know what the people were really thinking and saying.

It would be essential, of course, that these classes should not become mere debating societies. Provision against that would be found partly in the right kind of leader, whose trained authority would secure respect; but the whole system would have to be set in an intense atmosphere of religious fellowship and common worship. For this two kinds of worship are necessary: the Prayer Meeting and the Communion Service. It may seem almost ridiculous to suggest prayer meetings, after the experience of them that many of us have had. But although at the lowest to which they can degenerate they are the most wearisome and nauseating of all exercises, where there is real fellowship among those who take part and a real desire to know the mind and realise the guidance of God, they become supreme means of spiritual education. Such a combination of fellowship in prayer and united study would make each side react upon the other; the study would become religious and earnest, and the prayers would become definite and purposeful. We place equal importance upon a solemn celebration of the Communion, because that provides the opportunity for unobtrusive yet intense devotion and the imposition of a silent worship which would prune the prayer meeting type of prayer of its sometimes irreverent and speech-making elements, and cast over all the discussion the spirit of adoration.

In what order, or proportion, or at what times these separate elements should be gathered together would have to be discovered by experiment, but there should be some endeavour to secure that they are all linked together. We must have no kind of compulsion, but it ought to be understood that full membership in the Church was not granted until one had attended for at least a year at these instruction classes. But if we could get an early celebration of the Eucharist on Sunday morning, and the instruction class followed by the prayer meeting of an equally small group, not only would Sunday morning be better employed than it is at present, but there would surely be produced out of this combination men and women who were saintly, informed and fired, to serve their generation, whether as evangelists, or social workers, or in the carrying out of their principles in family life, the social circle, and the commerce of the world.

But this system necessitates that we must set the ministry free from the present impossible demands made upon it and attempt some specialisation of its manifold functions. It ought to be obvious by now that the endeavour to make every man a priest, prophet, evangelist and teacher is impossible. There are many men in the pulpit who toil to produce two sermons on Sunday with enormous effort and little success. Preaching is a distinct gift, and very few possess it. But at

present the vast wealth of the Church is practically being expended on the production of millions of sermons twice every Sunday. The tyranny of the sermon must be broken if we are to get on. Let us use the prophetic and evangelistic type of preacher in as large numbers as God is ever pleased to send to us, but do not let us perpetuate the present system where he is tied down to the pulpit which can afford to pay him best, and there destroy both his own soul and the souls of his hearers by this everlasting sermon production, out of which sooner or later all reality must depart. Let such men belong not to a congregation, but to the Church, and provided with suitable opportunities, either in the churches, or in public buildings, for their particular work of inspiring the Church or gathering in those outside. Such preachers would probably have to belong to some sort of religious order, so as to secure for them the checks as well as the inspiration of close contact with their fellows, and to remove them from all temptation to make money.

Whether the teacher and the priest should be one and the same is a difficult question; if the two offices were separated we should simply get the sacerdotal and the rational instinct drifting apart again. Perhaps it would be well to consider the suggestion of Tyrrell, that the priest should be unpaid, earning his living in the world, since simply

for the priestly part of worship a man does not need lengthy training, and we might thus avoid the false claims that priesthood has been tempted to make when it has been committed to a caste living a different life from others. The teacher would have to be trained as we now train the ordinary ministry, with considerable improvement and modifications, of course. But there is one work of the priest for which the most careful training is necessary, namely, the work of the Pastor in the Protestant Churches and the office of Confessor in the Catholic Churches. These two offices really lie close together, and their fusion would solve many problems. The cure of souls is the greatest of all callings, and it needs to be exercised with all the gifts that nature can bestow, all the knowledge of moral and mental problems that training can give, and the authority to give absolution which the Church has the right and power to delegate. There probably need not be one person exercising the pastoral office for every congregation; for it is needless to say that the hurried call and the afternoon-tea visit, which has to do duty for pastoral work to-day, and which simply wears some men to death at an utterly meaningless and ineffectual task, would be abolished. There is a necessity for providing that the membership of a Church shall be kept in close contact by friendly visitation, but this could be done by making the diaconate a real lay order and hand-

ing over this work to them. We assume that the need for the bishop, to exercise a more general oversight, is now recognised even by Nonconformists, for they really include that office, partly disguised under their Departmental Secretaryships and partially fulfilled by those honoured and learned brethren whom even the Congregational student likes to secure for his ordination service.

But for the professional ministry, teacher, pastor or bishop, there must be more opportunity for fellowship. The riot of opinions in the Church today, as well as the absence of fire and enthusiasm, is everywhere traceable to the lack of fellowship. We must leave to our ministry more time, not only for private, but for corporate study and prayer. It is only through fellowship that we shall ever get again a real grip of the catholic faith of Christianity, and only by waiting together in prayer and communion can we be prepared for the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

It will be disappointing if this discussion of the details of Church organisation, the education of our people, and the specialisation of the ministry, appears to anyone to be irrelevant to the task of propaganda which is the concern of this chapter. We cannot propagate a faith we do not understand; we cannot expect to see arise among us the venturesome evangelist who shall set the world on fire, unless he has received that fire first of all

from God; and the first essential for both the knowledge and power that the Church needs so badly is fellowship. The Church is failing to-day, and she has been led away in this present crisis, simply because she is not a *Church;* because she fails in real communion and fellowship. The mystical unity of the Eucharist, or the hand-shaking fervours of an occasional social gathering, are not sufficient to provide that fellowship on which the Church depends for her illumination and the baptism of fire. It is all very well to claim that the Church possesses the truth and is promised the infallible guidance of the Holy Ghost. I believe that there is given to the Church the keys of the Kingdom of heaven, that the Church is the Body of Christ, the perpetuation of His incarnation, and endowed with all the teaching, healing and redeeming powers of her glorious Head; but these powers and attributes can only be claimed for a "Church" —that is, for a fellowship. It must provide a real fellowship both for ministry and ordinary members, a fellowship of faith, a communion in holy things. The first reform we need to secure is that the Church shall be a Church.

It is out of this educational and spiritual fellowship that the solution of all our difficulties is going to come. There will be bred in this atmosphere the peculiar type which the Church alone can produce, namely, the saint. Secular education is wrong

somewhere at its very foundation. It destroys our imagination, our instincts, our power of initiative. The modern mind has been paralysed by problems which would never have troubled a healthy mind at all; for it has asked questions that could never be answered, simply because they ought never to have been asked. But even where the modern mind is certainly in advance of the mediæval mind, namely, in ethical passion and discernment, it is callosified by its lack of imagination and paralysed by the destruction of its instincts.

All the world knows that war is wrong, that it must be done away with because it is sin, sin of blood-guiltiness that stains the soul, depraves the mind and maddens the passions. Yet in this war we have the finest ethical ideals of the age being used in every country to urge men to slaughter their fellows, and we are arguing round and round to try to prove that war can be Christian. How can people be so blind? Has all the ethical awakening of the past century been of so little depth that this bloody slaughter, this hellish torture, this treacherous game of war can still secure ethical approval? It would be impossible thus to prostitute our ethical ideals if imagination had not been destroyed by a mechanical education. The men who see this thing close at hand know that nothing can make it righteous and nothing can sanctify it. It is only those who stay behind in safety, and who

have suppressed their feelings and vetoed their imagination, who can spin fine theories about its necessity, its purifying effects, and the redemption that will be wrought by its sacrifice.

But even if we felt all this about war, it is very unlikely that we should be able to do anything to stop it. We have lost initiative. When we are sure that we ought to act we do not know how to act. We have turned all our energies to theory work; we make no mistakes, but we make nothing else; we take no risks, but we achieve no marvels.

It is in the conviction, the power, the ambition after holiness that fellowship awakes, that we shall produce the type of man that we need, not only to confront the world with the present challenge of the Cross, but also to bring about an international reconciliation that shall not be broken again. Let the Church begin to be a Church, and we shall begin to see again a succession of evangelists, prophets and saints that will turn the world upside down, construct the true order of Christian society, build a universal Church, and establish the Kingdom of God on earth.

III

THE SOCIAL AND INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION OF CHRISTIANITY

The deeper the internal appreciation of Christianity penetrates, the more it will demand external expression; the more we become convinced of the absolute Lordship of Christ, the wider we shall desire to see His reign extended over every department of life. A real grip of the principle of the Incarnation carries with it the apprehension that human personality and temporal existence, so far from offering barriers to the Divine nature and the redemptive purpose, were created for these very ends. There is nothing, therefore, in human society, nothing in its economic basis, which should offer any barrier to the application of Christian principles. This same principle carries with it the Catholic conclusion that there must be a perpetuation of the Incarnation in the building up of a visible society which shall be the Body of Christ and the nucleus of redeemed humanity. The Church must express its devotion to its Divine Lord in a worship which, since man is body, soul and spirit, must embrace ritual expression and a theology, as well

as the mystic worship of the spirit. Catholic ideals of the Visible Body have so deteriorated into mere ecclesiasticism, and Catholic practice of worship confined itself so completely to ritual, that Protestantism has been tempted to abandon the idea of a visible society and to aim at the permeation of human society with Christian principles, and to prohibit all bodily expression in worship in order to emphasise the worship of the mind and soul. Catholicism has lingered so much over the initial stages of Christian expression that it has therefore encouraged Protestantism to try to dispense with them and begin farther on. The mistake made by this attempt to put asunder what God has joined together is now visible in the social impotence of Christendom and the drying up of the springs of worship and art. But the Catholic principle only needs extending to its full natural expression to be effective right through life. We must build a visible society, but surely that is not completed when we have founded what is often a mere association for certain religious purposes; that does not merit the name of a *society* at all. We have been pleading for a restoration of that fellowship which is the very purpose of a Church, but no fellowship is worthy of the name which is only fellowship for certain isolated purposes, while outside these life goes on in strife and enmity. All merely sacramental or mystic fellowship must

degenerate into formalism and hypocrisy unless it creates a fellowship in the common necessities of life. But the Sacrament itself, with its eating of the same loaf and drinking of the same cup, is a solemn protest against the luxury and poverty into which society is divided outside the Church door. The Church cannot restrict its fellowship merely to the things of the spirit.

The lesson is the same if we follow out the connection between religion and art. All art has come into being to express religious aspiration; it originates as an accessory to worship; ritual is the art of the body, the plastic arts the ritual of the mind, music the ritual of the spirit. But the more these are allowed the wider grows the demand for beauty in life. The discouragement of these things as true parts of worship has allowed to grow up, chiefly since the Reformation, our ugly cities, our ugly clothes, our ugly industrialism. The confirmation of what a wrong kind of protest the Reformation was is seen in the fact that the study of art has been the means of many moderns finding their way back to religion and awakening them to the need of social reform.

But we are to deal particularly with the expression of religion in social fellowship. There has never been a time in the Christian Church when it was not recognised that the only way of showing the love we have towards God is by loving our neigh-

bour. The full implication of this has not been always recognised; fellowship is a matter on which we have to develop a consciousness as well as a conscience; but the recognition has always been widening. The Creeds are abstract accounts of how Fellowship is preserved in the Godhead and created between God and man. All our ritual is a ritual of fellowship. Art is an expression of aspiration which cannot come into existence without fellowship, and is meaningless unless it is enjoyed in fellowship. But the supreme expression of religion is the fellowship of social life.

In its early stages Christianity began to push its feeling for fellowship under the old-established practice of chattel slavery, until eventually it brought it to the ground. But the growth of industrialism has simply replaced chattel and feudal slavery by another form, that of wage slavery. Under this system men are forced to sell their labour to others in order to gain the right to work, for the means of production are all locked up in private ownership. This not only dictates at what a man shall work, where, and for how long, but also resembles slavery in that the system ignores personal rights, and wages always gravitate, despite all adjustments, towards the bare subsistence level. When you possess accumulated capital, that is, the power to command labour, you emerge from wage slavery and become a slave owner.

Slowly but surely the Christian conscience is being wakened to see that its doctrine of fellowship is being everywhere flouted and denied by the system that has grown up around us. The economic doctrine that the wage system involves absolute slavery may be disputed, but its evil effects are patent. Everyone can see that under the present system the farther off you stand from actual production the more likelihood you have of making a fortune. This means that the less necessary you are to society the better you are rewarded. The old idea that if only everyone was temperate, thrifty and industrious there would be no poverty, really implies that if everyone was this everyone would rise to the employing class, when there would be no one to work for us. The profits of mechanical industrialism are greater than such necessary work as agriculture, for instance, and therefore the whole world is drifting towards a condition of industrial competition in which it may find itself possessed of everything save food to eat. These ultimate issues are not generally recognised, but what meets the eye and smites the mind of all who care for the highest common interests of mankind is that the system works out to an ever greater disparity between the rich and the poor, that fellowship is replaced by suspicion, hostility and the "class war," and that religion comes to be a mere mockery, since the fellowship on which it rests has been destroyed.

Here, then, is a social system which denies to religion both its basis and its expression. And it is a system which most people can now see will not yield to smiles, handshakes, Eucharists and being polite to workmen. It does not matter how nice you are to your next door neighbour, how beautifully you may behave when a working man is shown into your pew by mistake, how much you may labour to make him feel at home in the glorious churches he has built, if outside, and all the other days of the week, you are living on him, selling him like a slave. Whenever the truth dawns upon the Church as a whole we shall cease to be amazed that workmen get more and more to look to socialism as a religion and to preach the class war and economic revolution as their one hope. Socialism may be a heresy; the Roman Catholic Church practically treats it as such; but, like all heresies, it is simply a bit of the Catholic faith which someone has made the only article of faith in revenge for the Church having forgotten and denied it.

What attitude must the Church take towards these social conditions? We have moved past the stage when it was thought that charity could remedy the situation. Under the present system charity blesses neither him that gives nor him that receives. This is a serious reflection for the Church, which has made almsgiving so great an expression

of Christian love; one of its greatest practical virtues has become partly an insult and partly a crime. We have also got past the day when the fallacy of "indifferentism" could be recommended even to the wealthy Church member as the essence of the Gospel on this subject. We have every right to maintain that spiritual concerns do immensely decrease the anxiety with which men regard outward possessions, and that it is possible to have the peace of God though some fierce tyrant may be starving you to death. The Gospel does declare that poverty is safer for the soul than riches. But by poverty it means neither destitution nor forcible restriction from access to the means of production, which is what poverty spells to-day. But the Gospel gives no countenance to the idea that we may have the peace of God while we are forcing others to remain in poverty. All the interior resources of religion are open to those who may be in prison, subjected to torture, compelled to fight with wild beasts in the amphitheatre; but these same resources are not open to those who are inflicting these penalties upon their victims. The poor man may be counselled to be indifferent to his condition, but the rich man is not allowed to be. It seems a paradox, but it really bases itself upon the recognition that the riches of the rich man are the cause of the poor man's poverty. The parable of Dives and Lazarus has been criticised because the rich man

seems to go to hell for nothing else but the crime of being rich. Precisely; that *is* the reason.

Perhaps no one of any intelligence or Christian disposition now urges that the present system would be all right if only it were worked in the right spirit. The present system will not allow you to act in the right spirit, for often when I act thus to one person I have to act otherwise to another. In a system of competition, where I am nice to one grocer I have to threaten the existence of another. The right spirit would create a *different system.*

Neither can the Church remain content with examining the various principles of social and economic reconstruction which are placed before us, and criticising and rejecting them because they do not follow the Christian principle. It is only fair that those who have put forward the principles thus criticised should ask, What, then, *does* your Gospel teach? It is quite on the right lines that emphasis should be laid upon the study of social problems as one of the great duties of modern Christians, but it must not end in mere academic study. It may be necessary for the Christian Church to "create an atmosphere" in which these subjects are rightly considered and true reform is likely to grow; but it must be confessed that the atmosphere created up to the present is either foggy or muggy, leaving us quite without guidance

as to what line Christian action ought to take, or making us all too "done" to lift a little finger to bring the true conditions into being.

The Church ought by now to be discovering what the Gospel principles of the social order are, and how that order ought to be established. It may be thought that there is very little real guidance on such subjects in the teaching of Christ, and that we have no right to expect that there should be; but we hold that Christ's teaching really covers all true human need, and history shows that it is only developing human need that enables us to recognise its enormous range and profundity. Some things stand out quite clearly. The Gospel forbids us to estimate life according to the abundance of possessions, and does advocate poverty as preferable for the soul. It does set forth the ideal of service as superior to that of being served. What do these principles mean when translated into economic terms? For they must not remain a mere spirit, but must incarnate themselves in a social order. These principles may seem slight enough to serve as the foundations of a true society, but careful study will show that they are capable of wide application.

The other question is, What is the Gospel method of working towards such an ideal social order? One can presume upon a general agreement among all Christian people who have given a thought to the matter that, in the Kingdom of

God, there will be a condition of society to which economic communism is the nearest concrete thing that has been conceived. The real differences begin to emerge when we ask how that is to be approached. We need waste no time over the idea that we shall have to wait for this order to be set up by the sudden intervention of God, or that the Christian Church must only supply the leavening idea and disown all organisation and politics as essentially evil, though there is something true underlying both these ideas which has to be recognised: namely, that we cannot expect to create the new society without a much greater recognition of God and dependence upon Him than at present is common, and that the coercive method of legislation and the scheming of politics are both excluded as methods the Church cannot adopt.

Consider for a moment the proposals for working towards the ideal society that have been put forward, not simply to criticise, but in order to see if we can find by contrast what the Church's policy must be. There is the Liberal programme of redressing the inequalities of possession by taxation. But this is slow, raises the cry of confiscation, and is apparently ineffective, for taxation generally descends until it presses hardest upon the working classes. There is the Socialistic principle of the State ownership of all the means of production, transport and exchange. But this scheme is

beginning to lose some of its old attraction, even for the working classes, for it may still mean that the State will be tyrannical and the workers attain little real liberty. There remains the Syndicalist proposal that the workers should completely own, manage and control everything connected with their various trades, and that they should employ what expert knowledge and managerial ability may be necessary. It is generally held that such control of the industrial machine could only be attained by a general strike or some other violent method.

Over all these suggestions there hangs the threat of coercion, the bitterness which the struggle must entail, the necessity for the Church to take sides, with all the peril that means. Is it not possible to build up the new social order within the old one, the task being undertaken by those who have come so far as to see that this is the one confession of their faith in Christ's Lordship for which they must live or die? It is precisely this that the Gospel seems to indicate. Christ expected that His followers would start constructing an order of society on quite opposite lines to that which prevailed among the nations, a society where there would be no lording it over others, but only a struggle for the bottom place and an ambition to do the most humble tasks. Is it possible to work out what that would mean as an actual society, and to take steps towards establishing it?

Nothing more can be thrown out here but the roughest suggestions, for the writer professes no ability to deal with subjects of this nature. But there are concrete examples before us of what can be done and of what has been accomplished. Take the great Co-operative Movement. It has never realised its early ideals, but it is still capable of being reformed and extended. What a glorious thing it would have been if the Church had commenced this movement and had encouraged all Christian people to be co-operators. Go back to the Middle Ages, and we have the Church setting before those who would follow Christ more perfectly the monastic life. Much time has been spent in criticising monasticism and in repeating ridiculous stories about its failure, with the result that it is generally regarded as an anti-social experiment, undertaken for utterly wrong motives, its false basis being proved by its moral decline. Few seem to have recognised how near it came to be an amazing success. It failed because it found it impossible to remain poor. It was a communistic system whose wealth was its downfall. The reason of its riches, apart from the lavishing of gifts, which came later, was due to the fact that it was celibate; there were no children to be supported. May it not be possible that a family monasticism of the type that apparently prevailed in early Celtic Christianity offers a line that has not yet been worked out?

Alongside this we may put the multifarious activities of the Mediæval Church which covered every need of human life, recreation, insurance, trades unions, as well as worship and what we now call religion. Many of the villages were practically religious communes.

All this raises the question whether some attempt at communal life might be made among clerics and in our villages as a start. The objection will be made that this is putting the clock back. But it rather looks as if God were going to put it back for us. History teaches us one lesson that no one seems yet to have learned, namely, that when human society develops to a certain extent it has to be reduced again to a more primitive type of existence. We can see now that the development was generally on wrong lines, and it looks as if God were continually giving man a fresh start. We may have that opportunity forcibly presented to us if the war continues; but let us be ready this time to recognise that it *is* an opportunity. Someone may object that this would make the Church a vast organisation rather than an inspiration; it is reversing the development by which all these practical concerns have been handed over to the State. But is it not beginning to dawn upon us that developments may sometimes be wrong, and that this development certainly is? The Church is shrinking to a vanishing point in its influence on modern

life. It is not inspiring life, not even creating an atmosphere, save one which some supercilious noses declare to be that of putrefaction. Religion tends to get divorced from common life, to develop pseudo-mysticism and a false spirituality, and common life gets more and more sordid, hysterical, vicious and materialistic. The State is not being Christianised, the Church is being reduced to a level far less effective than Freemasonry, and religion is losing contact with reality. The State is not doing the tasks that the Church committed to it half so well as the Church once did, and the reason is not far to seek: the State corrupts everything by its principle of coercion. The construction of a true order of society, therefore, seems to be the Church's immediate duty, not to be deputed to any other power, not to be postponed until some general revolution in the social order has taken place, nor to be attempted on the usual political or coercive lines. It is here that the Church's salvation may be found.

We turn now to consider the international problem, the problem of how to put an end to war. It might be thought that this really preceded the consideration of the social problem, so insistent has the fearful catastrophe of the war made the solution of this problem. It must be solved, or civilisation will perish. For it is obvious that we are either at the end of war or at the beginning of a new series, more awful than, even with our

latest experiences, we can imagine. In the next war we may see whole continents leagued one against the other, the last shreds of conventional chivalry and respect for non-combatants will have been torn to pieces, and the invention of new forms of destruction will have reached a development in which it will be possible to wipe out the inhabitants of a large town by one explosion, perhaps to poison the peoples of whole lands. It is surely useless to talk about the solution of the social problem until we have got war out of the way.

We have deliberately put the solution of the social problem first because we believe that the root problem of war is economic, that it is almost vain to hope for a peaceful international order when we have a warring competitive social order. It is perfectly true that we have made war to cease between competitive groups by joining them under one government, but the general development of industrialism probably demands that war shall continue in ever-growing fierceness. War has always been predominantly economic. In primitive times there was the desire to possess the fruitful valleys; then, as trade developed, there was a struggle for the natural highways, the coastline, good harbours and waterways; now it is for the areas where there are the richest natural resources of coal, iron and rubber. Modern industrialism demands huge areas for exploitation, wide territories

for selling its manufactures, and, of course, vast masses of servile labour. But it may be making for starvation all the time. The greater profits to be obtained by mechanical industrialism compete to the disadvantage of agricultural interests. The wheatfields shrink as each country gets developed; tea estates are already being dug up and planted with rubber; the biggest prizes are to be found at the remotest distance of actual production. There is an inevitable end to a civilisation of this kind.

If, therefore, we are going to put an end to war, we have first to cut some of the roots that are feeding it: the competitive social order, the great financial interests which are always working up diplomacy and sometimes deliberately engineering war scares. But alongside this we have to work away at the perfecting of international machinery for settling disputes as well as getting the mind of the masses armoured against the immoral appeals to hate and the age-long delusions and false idealisms of war.

The strengthening of moral opposition to war is the strongest of all protections against it; and this should be especially the Church's work. But to this task the Church has yet to be aroused. It is perhaps not necessary to be too despairing because in this crisis the Church has treated the Sermon on the Mount as a "scrap of paper," set out to pervert the meaning of Christ's cross, and lent the

whole weight of her religious appeal to the prosecution of the war. It might have been expected that the Church would have, at least, got as far as recognising that war was an inappropriate method of spreading religion. Until two years ago every Church historian would have acknowledged that the Crusades were one of the greatest blunders and most unchristian enterprises to which the Church ever committed herself. We had all come to a sort of fixed idea that Mahomet's doctrine of conversion by the sword showed how much lower that religion was than our own. And yet we are told that this is a holy war, that it is really a fight for a religious principle, a great crusade against the forces of evil, the only way of changing the mind of the enemy. But all the wild statements that have been made at this time do not represent the real convictions of the Church, and we shall soon have these fire-eating parsons and pugnacious professors cooing as sweet as doves and adopting a quite different type of Christianity as soon as it gets popular again. Whether the people will forget remains to be seen.

Sooner or later the problem of peace and how to preserve it will be the great problem of the hour, and then the Church will have to try to say something. It will have a lot of leeway to make up, but so it had on the social problem. There may be a similar coquetting with the doctrine of "in-

differentism"; the idea that one can be as religious in war as in peace; that its great sacrifices and awful death are not incompatible with the peace of God. But as we saw in discussing the "indifferent" attitude to social conditions, the real question here is not whether you can have the peace of God while you are being sacrificed, but whether you can have it while you are sacrificing someone else. Soldiers will have to be the witnesses on this subject, and the problem will probably receive a somewhat different handling from them than it receives from theologians who discuss it from arm-chairs. We are told that it is not wrong to kill a man if that is the only way of restraining him from evil, and that only those with no faith in immortality can regard killing as something very terrible. These theologians seem to have forgotten that there is a commandment on this point, number six, which was not abrogated by Jesus, but rather strengthened by His advice that we should flee even the temper that might lead to this sin. It is perfectly true that to hate may sometimes be morally worse than to kill, because killing may bring home to a man the awful consequences of his state of mind; strange reactions are set at work when you see your enemy slain at your feet; whereas fireside haters never repent at all, and their souls contract blood-guiltiness unrecognised. To argue that there is a great ethical difference between killing in

warfare and the killing which we call murder, which the Sixth Commandment is sometimes restricted to condemn, may have some ethical justification, but it is more often on the side of murder. A man may commit murder for revenge in a fit of passion, and repent of his wicked deed; the soldier is hired to kill men with whom he has no personal quarrel, and may now kill his foe by a machine from miles distant, seeing nothing of the shattered body which may be left writhing in agony for days, hearing nothing of the muttered curses, the calling upon some beloved name, the dying cry to God, and, therefore, never having the opportunity to repent, getting the easiest of all absolutions, that granted by the State, or by the Protestant professional theologian, who will take upon himself to say: "I absolve thee in the name of the Moral Law, the Righteousness of Defensive Warfare and the Sacred Security of Society."

But we are not among those who regard killing a man as, in the abstract, the deadliest of sins; we think that the heavier moral guilt rests on those who argue as if killing ever were "in the abstract." We do not look back upon the times when abbots swung a battleaxe and Church dignitaries led armies as ages when the Church was morally more corrupt than now. We think these acts on the part of the Church have stained her history almost beyond purging, have corrupted her testimony and

have deceived the world as to the meaning of Christianity; but they are not so bad in effect as the soul-destroying arguments by which modern Bishops and leading Nonconformist Divines try to justify war—from a distance.

It is warfare by means of machinery and money that has made war an intolerable moral degradation for the modern world, poisoning the mind of whole peoples, making it impolitic to tell the truth, puffing up nations with self-righteousness. It is for its absolutely demoralising effect upon those who urge it on from behind the firing-lines that we must bring it to an end. It has become such an enemy to conscience and truth that if we cannot end it, it will leave civilised man without a vestige of a soul.

Now how is that going to be done? Everyone is now talking of a League to Enforce Peace, and some of those very Churchmen who have been most enthusiastic over the exalting and purifying effects of war will now be found rushing to embrace this new device which is to remove the possibility of war for ever from the world. We believe that war can be swept from the world, but we have no desire to live in a world where war has been made impossible by purely political devices or preventive force. We do not believe that the Kingdom of Heaven is going to be established on earth by the policeman, but by moral consent. We do not

believe in a heaven where you cannot sin, but only in one where no one wants to. This ought to appeal to all those who at this time have found it convenient to sneer at pacifist views as lacking in bravery and depriving earth of all adventure. We have no sympathy with those pacifists who want wars to stop merely because they destroy business, make shopping difficult, or keep one awake at night listening for Zeppelins.

But since appeal on higher ground is not at present open, we may perhaps be allowed to point out one or two possible effects of the proposed League to Enforce Peace. In its crudest form, that of a number of the Great Powers leagued against any possible threatening Power (which is apparently all that some of the American sympathisers want, for they are also supporters of the "preparedness" campaign), it hardly needs to be pointed out that this is almost exactly the condition we have now, for there is only one Great Power not at present in alliance against the Central Powers. In the more general presentation of the scheme it is, however, provided that there shall be a Tribunal to which all matters of quarrel which were previously settled by war shall be submitted, and that the signatories to this arrangement shall pledge themselves to fight any nation that refuses to submit its case, or attempts warlike measures before the prescribed interval for consideration is over. It

seems to be assumed that there will never be more than one recalcitrant nation at a time, which it would be easy for the rest of the world to threaten or coerce. But what guarantee have we that the nations signatory to the arrangement might not split up into two almost equally balanced sides? As thus stated the proposals simply mean that every war will now be a world war, and that if the nations retain their present armaments as their contribution to the force which is to secure peace, it would make every war of a more awful character than we can imagine. Or if, as is sometimes suggested, the arrangement should be accompanied by such a reduction in armaments that it would practically mean a small police force entirely controlled by the Tribunal, then it would be very easy for any recalcitrant nation to build a fleet or raise an army which could resist it.

We do not desire merely to criticise any proposals that are going to register a real advance in the moral consciousness of mankind. We do not urge the objection that, because we believe coercion to be unideal and always weakening to the moral advance of man, that there is never any right to use force. The "police force" which was to keep the peace of the world would be no more and no less objectionable than the present police system which keeps the peace within the State. We believe even that to be below the Christian ideal and

constantly involving Christian men in injustice and inducing moral paralysis. If at every difficulty with our neighbours or threat by evil men we can call in a policeman it may make for peace and security, but it is not the peace of God, who is quite wrongly conceived by British theologians as an Infinite Policeman whose sole business in this scheme of things is to enforce obedience to the Moral Law; and the security thus obtained is hemispheres away from what our religion calls "salvation."

It is to a great advance in the moral sense of mankind and to the awakening of a world-wide religious movement that we must look, whatever legislation may be attempted or protective devices constructed. Our Scriptures have set before us the true ideal. The peace of the world is to be made by the blood of the cross. In the Ephesian Epistle there is outlined an application of the Atonement which we have yet to grasp intellectually and experimentally. There the cross is made to reconcile man to man, to break down hostilities and barriers, and uniting what was opposed, "reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross," "so making peace." [1] We do not profess to be able to understand what this means, or to see how it would work out in actual history, but we do believe that there is here outlined an unexplored power of the cross of Christ to bring peace to the world. If only there

[1] Eph. ii. 15, 16.

could dawn upon Europe at this time that the war means the crucifying of the Son of God afresh, and the putting of Him to an open shame, we might see the fruition of His great sacrifice and the ending of His travail. For the passage seems to hint that man must be reconciled to man before man can be reconciled to God. The war must mean the crucifixion of Christ, if the Head still suffers with the members.

> "Christ dies before us in the war;
> The wounded show His mangled hands,
> We plait His crown in many lands,
> And all the weapons of our pride
> Are piercing the Saviour's side."

If above the smoke of the battle and the lines of trenches we could really see the cross, so often pictured by our half-seeing artists for very different purposes, then men would lay down their arms, the old enmities would be forgotten in a common penitence, the past would be blotted out by the repentance of all the nations, and a peace brought to the world that will certainly never be established by the way of war. Translate this into what political terms you like; it will bear any actuality. It would mean that nations, convinced at last of their international crimes and false imperialisms, would start off on a new development, a new rivalry to establish the kingdom of God, a new ambition to follow Christ, if needs be, to the bearing of the cross.

There is the hope of the world, and the Church in every land should be pressing that home upon the popular imagination now. And let us remember what the alternative may be. If it is not beneath the cross of Jesus that nations will lay down their arms, it may be by revolution among the armies and rebellion among the workers. If we cannot secure the ending of the war by the blood of the cross, other blood may flow which will not cleanse but only cry out for blood the more. But it may need a crucified Church to bring a crucified Christ before the eyes of the world.

For let us understand clearly that we are not going to end war by making people more afraid of it. War will cease to vex the earth when men no longer fear it; when they have grown so brave that not all its horrors affright them. And when the fear of it goes the preparations for its defence will go too, and when they go war itself will disappear. And we are surely nearly ready for that. Men are now willing to face almost certain death to gain an almost completely uncertain end. It only requires one step more for men to be willing to risk more for a better cause. And with the stage that war has now reached, with the utter lack of discrimination between combatants and non-combatants, it is clear that whatever risks would need to be taken they would not involve anything worse than war now means. But even if they did it would be worth

while. Our belligerent idealists tell us that it matters not if we are destroyed if only right is vindicated; they cannot reproach the pacifist for calling for further risks to be taken in order to save the world from sin. What the pacifist is concerned about is not a guarantee against war, but the development of the genius for making peace when war threatens or when it is actually in progress; to oppose the dangers of war by taking the greater risks of love; meeting the violence of force by the violence of the Kingdom of heaven. Let us by all means have alliances, reform our diplomatic service, secure democratic control of foreign policy, work for an International Government. Since Tennyson's prophecy of the

> "Nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue"

has come literally true, let us believe that the other prophecy can be fulfilled:

> "Till the war drums throbbed no longer, and the battle flags were furled
> In the parliament of man, the federation of the world."

World Government in matters that affect the whole world, with plenty of Home Rule and Local Government, must be the ultimate solution. But the finest machinery and most wonderfully devised government will avail nothing unless the heart of man be changed; and by that we mean what the

New Testament means, namely, a change of mind, a different estimate of the aim of life, of what constitutes happiness, right, honour, duty. Any arrangements with our present outlook for uniting the great governments of the world might only leave the Great Powers for ever sitting on the smaller nationalities and the growing nations; might mean that Europe, America and Japan would league together to enslave China, Africa and South America.

The probability is that, just as the personal redemption of the world had to be accomplished by the sacrifice of our Lord, so the redemption of societies and nations may have to be accomplished by the sacrifice of the Church or of some nation. We are still convinced that the spectacle of some great nation laying down its arms at a time of danger, whatever the consequences to itself, would be an act of moral adventure that would bring about the redemption of the world from the fear of war which all these generations has held us in bondage. But before we can expect any nation to do that we surely have the right to ask that the Church shall set the example first. Any Church which now began to proclaim the full Gospel of Jesus Christ would have to suffer persecution, perhaps even to extinction. It will certainly be the case in the future that members of the Church of Christ will, in ever greater numbers, refuse to bear arms. If the Church as a whole were converted

to this doctrine, and an International Agreement of all Christians to that effect was made, the Church thus anticipating the Socialists' International, then we might see the Church of Christ with every civilised State arrayed against it, archbishops and Nonconformist ministers in prison, not only for resisting the law, but for seditious alliance with their fellow Christians in enemy countries. But we should be getting near to a fulfilment of what the New Testament expected, and we could wish no better thing for our Church leaders at this time than that they should be thrown into prison, shot on the parade ground, lynched by the mob. They would gain the martyr's crown, prove their apostolic succession, and we should recite their names at the Mass, at the Eucharist, and the Communion as long as the world endured. When we see any Church becoming a real danger to the world powers we should know that that is the one true Church. If this may not be hoped for, then we do hope to see some order of men and women loyal to the Visible Church, but sworn, like the Franciscans are supposed to be, not to bear arms, not only taking the persecution which the various States meted out to them, but planting their communities on all the exposed frontiers and dangerous places of the world.

But what we want for any of these things is an International Church. Nearly everyone can see

that now. All the other Internationals have broken down; the Labour International, the Commercial International. The Church must now show that she can accomplish what they have only attempted. The chance of being the first to do it will soon be snatched from her. Even belligerent Churchmen are now beginning to see that national Churches can become accomplices in national crimes, and Protestant individualists are getting convinced that the great hope of the world is not in diplomacy or armaments, but in a really Catholic Church.

IV

THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW CATHOLICISM

EVERYTHING that we have been saying leads to one conclusion: we must have a Church that is united, that is faithful to Christ, and that is international. This is but asking in modern terms that the Church shall be One, Holy, Catholic. These have always been the great ideals of the Church which have moved men, but the trouble is that they have hitherto been sought in isolation and opposition to one another. The Catholic stands for the unity of the Church, by which he has come to mean its historic continuity and its centralisation round one visible head. The Puritan has demanded that at all costs holiness shall be secured. The "modern" Churchman is all for comprehensiveness, the embracing of every variety, temperament and, as far as possible, belief. Each of these ideals, sought alone, has rapidly deteriorated. For Catholic continuity has come to mean, not the preservation of the same spirit, but mere mechanical succession or unchanging rite, while its centralisation has come to mean an obedience to the Roman See of the most unintelligent and paralysing kind. Those of us who

are not Catholics can see certain great ideas bound up with the claims of Rome. It is a great thing to feel that one belongs to the Church that has come down unbroken from the great years of persecution, that one is taking part in a service which never needs to change in any age or country, that one has a visible leader to whom one can look for direction. But if we outside can see that the ideal may be right, while its actual embodiment may be imperfect, cannot Romans begin to meet us halfway by admitting that the continuity of mechanical contact is at least so doubtful that everything cannot be made to hang upon it, that the Mass has undergone great changes and therefore is not fixed for ever in its present form, and that the Roman Bishop has based his claims upon bad history, enforced them by worse methods, and broken the adherence of many who would have preferred to be loyal but could not give allegiance to what had become utterly unlike Jesus Christ? There might begin to be some movement if we could get as far as the mutual admission of facts. Protestants might then begin to admit that they had lost a good deal at the Reformation, and that they had sometimes broken step too readily.

To come to the more general ideas held to be essential by all "catholic" Churches: the threefold order of the ministry and the historic episcopate. Nonconformist Churches have the right to

say that Catholic Churches do not set forth the threefold ministry any better than themselves; if Nonconformists do not have a separate order of bishops, neither do Catholic Churches really have a separate order of deacons. It may be that the threefold ministry is a good order, but it would help immensely if it were traced not to any original and unchanging apostolic decree, but to the gradual direction of the Holy Spirit resident in the Church guiding it according to developing needs. And Nonconformists claim that they *can* get on without Bishops. They may be desirable; they are not essential. If they were really representative of the Church as a whole, if they were elected by the Church, if it were understood that they bestowed the grace of orders because that was what they were commissioned to do by the Church, there would be room for a new understanding of what orders meant. But Nonconformists ought also to be reminded that this modified presentation of the meaning of the episcopate and orders is going on in Anglicanism, and that their objections will soon have been met if the change of conception and emphasis go on much further.

Similarly with the sacraments. As means to that perfection which the New Testament calls salvation they are, in the writer's opinion, necessary, but there is an opinion abroad, fostered by many Catholic pronouncements, that they are necessary

in order for one to secure the bare minimum of salvation, namely, inclusion in the care and concern of God. Over against that there will always have to stand the depleted sacramental notions of Nonconformity, which really make the sacraments unnecessary, and the more vigorous testimony of the Society of Friends and the Salvation Army, that the great heights of the Christian life can be attained without them. So long as the one extreme claim is made, so long will the extreme denial continue. And yet meantime there is growing up among Nonconformists, and even among Friends, a longing for sacraments; but they cannot deny elements in the Christian faith that seem to them essential in order to gain other elements which seem to others essential.

Rome, therefore, and, in a lesser degree, the other Catholic Churches, stand in the way to reunion so long as they preserve their present attitude. But let it not be supposed that we are voicing a demand that there shall be the wholesale surrender of sacraments, of episcopacy, or even of papacy. It is only the Christianisation of them that is asked, the abandonment of doctrines about them which reduce the Christian salvation to magic and mechanism. Reasonable Protestant and Nonconformist demands might be met without the surrender of anything vital.

But if Rome stands in the way, so also, it must

be said, does a good deal in Nonconformity. The Puritan spirit has made the holiness of the Church its particular concern, and the Puritan witness has been necessary and valuable. Its concern that the Church shall consist of the faithful, that it shall remain true to its original principles, and that it shall be so organised that it is capable of being led into truth, is one that is still necessary. But if we ask that Catholic Churches shall do something to satisfy that demand we have also to ask that Nonconformists shall recognise that the way they have pressed their demands has not always been charitable, and the attempts to secure them amongst themselves have not attained any greater success than the pursuit of the other isolated ideals of the Church. Puritanism has not always developed the best of tempers, as the constant splits in its own history show. Its tests for holiness have been unreal and have failed to secure that none but Christians enter the Church and no Christian is kept out. The experience of conversion, which has been insisted on as preliminary to admission to the Church, is one that cannot be made the subject of any human test. The test of adherence to a system of theology has kept many who loved Jesus Christ outside the visible Church. Beyond that, Puritanism has developed a somewhat morose attitude towards recreation, art, and ritual, and its prejudices have helped to diminish the sense of beauty and make our com-

mon life deplorably ugly. It has sometimes been obstinate, trivial, and made Nonconformity appear an impossible position, vetoing everything that any other Church does simply because that Church does it, refusing to do anything that anyone else does. But this temper is passing away; the Puritan spirit now craves a Church which shall be a nursery and school of saints, and it is willing to recognise that Catholic Churches do produce a certain type of saintliness that they cannot produce; that the sacramental system gives a humility, an awe, an absence of parade and pompousness that their own system seems sometimes to encourage. But they do still demand that there shall always be room for free prophecy, for free prayer, for the freer forms of worship which they have found do minister to the spiritual life. Will the other Churches not consider these demands? No one asks to-day that the Catholic shall abandon his Mass or his Liturgy, or purge his worship of the supernatural and the mystical; but alongside these it is demanded that there shall be provision for the other types of worship which develop reliance, understanding, and independence. But Nonconformists must really get rid of many of their prejudices, their absurd pretence that their system needs no admixture of Catholic ideals, their everlasting claims to be superior because they can do without so many of the aids to worship that Catholics confess they

need. Pharisaism is no sign of spiritual superiority, nor is cocksureness about one's salvation the same thing as Christian assurance. Many Nonconformists are quite unaware of the strong devotional life that exists and nourishes itself on forms that they themselves despise; and they are probably equally unaware of a certain vulgarity, irreverence and indecency that their own type of free-and-easy worship sometimes begets. They therefore are also a hindrance to reunion, and we have to make the same charge of obstinacy, imperiousness and uncharitableness that we have to complain of in the attitude of Rome or the rigid Anglo-Catholic.

Our sympathies go out more readily to the liberal Christian. He rightly demands that no confession of word or rite can determine whether a man is a true Christian; he properly refuses to believe any dogma or accept any theory that shuts out from the benefits of Christ's passion the morally sincere; he will not acknowledge that the right of any institution to call itself a Church depends upon the volubility or exclusiveness of its claims. Judging from appearances, he is inclined to say that the louder the claims the less they are worth examining. Would any real Church have to rely so much on self-advertisement? It is utterly unlike Christ, who concealed His claims lest they should prejudice men's judgment. The modernist wants to see theology brought into line with the latest knowledge,

and a man's salvation not made dependent upon the acceptance of creeds which few people can believe and fewer understand. His claims deserve to be recognised. The Church has evidently been drawing the line of demarcation at the wrong place.

But our broad friend is a little bit of a hindrance too. He sometimes asks us to part with the very essence of the faith on some supposed discovery, and to revolutionise theology on what soon proves to be a quite temporary philosophical system. His Church membership test sometimes comes near to a mere demand of respectable character, which means that he would shut out the harlot and the publican that Christ said would go into the kingdom of heaven first. Some of his interpretations of Christ by the sonship that belongs to every man, and of the cross by the sacrificial spirit that has displayed itself in all history, obliterate the very height of the sonship to which He would lift us all, and overlook that very difference in the sacrifice of the cross on which the salvation of the world depends. Sometimes he is so anxious to make the Christian faith easy of intellectual acceptance that he leaves it with no challenge to the modern mind, which is certainly hopelessly astray on many points, and has helped the world to its present state. We notice that he girds at dogmas like the Incarnation and then asks us to swallow the dogma of reincarnation. He dislikes the miracles in the Gospels, and

the next moment he tells us they are all happening at the Church of Christ Scientist round the corner. Sometimes he seems to understand any religion better than he can Christianity. Yet he is often earnest, has his finger on real difficulties, does pull the Church up to ask whether it knows itself what it means. Surely it would be possible to meet his demands by letting it be understood that, as a body, the Church was pledged to the highest interpretation of Christ and His Cross, but letting it also be understood that the full faith is one that can only be experienced by those who have entered the fellowship of the Church and passed through many phases of thought and experiment. It ought to be enough to ask that those who seek full membership in the Church do so because they want to appropriate all that Christianity can offer them, and it might be a sufficient article of faith to start with that they should believe in the institution they seek to enter, namely, that they believe in the Holy Catholic Church. That really includes all else, and does pledge one to loyalty to the visible body, and to work for its unity, extension, and prosperity.

It is therefore to the endeavour to combine in one Church the three ideals of unity, holiness and comprehensiveness, which have hitherto been sought in opposition, that we must now set ourselves. All the Churches must come to realise that they have

been guilty of the sin of schism; not so much that of the external kind, repudiating authority or pressing claims until they have caused rebellion, though nearly all of them in one way or another have much to answer for even on that count; but the far worse schism of setting themselves to minister only to a part of human nature, either the craving for authority or the demand for freedom, the longing for mystical communion or the desire for rational understanding. The Churches have not only divided the Body of Christ; they have divided the soul of man. If one sets out in this modern world to find a Church which shall provide real spiritual fellowship, one soon discovers that in every Church that exists we can have freedom *or* authority, mysticism *or* rationalism, the supernatural *or* the natural, liturgical *or* free prayer, trained and prepared preaching *or* untrained and unprepared preaching, a worship dominated by awe *or* directed like a public meeting; whereas a human being wants all these things at one time or another. But no, I must take my choice; if I have the one, I cannot have the other; I must join a denomination which feeds only half my nature and denies that the other exists, find my fellowship with people who have only one eye, make the rest of my spiritual pilgrimage on one leg. Our modern Churches have become the most irritating institutions on earth, and they are doing

nothing but breeding coteries of most undesirable people, all of them narrow, especially those who boast of their broad-mindedness; trained in partiality, drilled to defend a parochial area of religion, with a fixed and fanatical adherence to one element of Christianity, and a bundle of prejudices concerning all the others. Surely the madness of it all is now visible and the hunger of man's religious nature has grown too fierce to be contented with the unwholesome dietaries the rival Churches provide.

One sees little hope at present for large schemes of reunion, but one has less patience for the idea that centuries must elapse before we can expect anything better; for this patchy and piecemeal Church can hardly last that length of time. One must rather look for the quickening of the inner life of the Church, a determination to know the whole mind of Christ and make all the members of the Body loyal to their Head. A mere closing of ranks, due to economic pressure or undertaken on the business principle of avoiding waste and eliminating competition, will bring no union of the Churches worthy of the name. What is wanted is a vision of the universality of Christ, a conviction of the catholicity of Christianity, the awakening of man's entire nature. Officials and leaders can have little idea of the craving for a catholic Christianity that is

working among the rank and file; mainly because it generally voices itself in vague discontent, the poor souls not knowing quite what is the matter with them, and rushing round to all the new cults in turn in a vain search after what they are quite unaware catholic Christianity amply provides.

Fortunately we have passed the stage when there will be any attempt to unite the Church on the basis of each denomination surrendering its distinctive elements and agreeing on a sort of minimum; a proposal that would leave us with a religion reduced to its lowest and least interesting features. It is the elements for which the defenders of each system are prepared to die that have to be understood, represented, and fused together in one Church.

There may come a great revival of religion, a sudden reformation of some of the Churches, that will bring these hopes suddenly over the horizon of possibility; but while we may have to wait for the Divine touch which will alone bring the consummation of our hopes, there are preparations we can undertake that will certainly hasten the day.

We must plead for an extension of toleration; not only the removal of the last suspicion of State disability or of social ostracism, but also the determination of every Church to think of all other Christians as partakers of Christ. We do not

mean that we are simply to recognise that each Church caters for a certain need, and stands for a certain truth, and should therefore be left to go its own way unmolested. That would deprive us of even that contact which declared hostilities and a proselytising propaganda afford. If any Church caters for a certain need and stands for a certain truth, then it is a need and a truth no Church can afford to neglect. The true toleration must initiate the desire to understand the other position, and try to see if that position cannot be met from one's own point of view. Let a Protestant take the doctrines of transubstantiation and purgatory, for instance, and instead of fastening on all the abuses and errors he can discover, endeavour to find what need these have met and whether they contain a core of truth, and let him see if he cannot translate that truth and meet that need along the line of his own principles. Let Nonconformists try to discover why Anglicans make so much of Episcopacy and Orders, find what needs they meet and what ends they conserve, and then see whether he can give these a meaning and a representation that does not conflict with his own position. Let the Roman ask why the Reformation took place, why some good Christians fear Rome more than they do the devil, and let him not simply try to rewrite unfortunate history, even if it has been

exaggerated, but rather prove that, perverted or not, it can never happen again. The modernist has the impression that catholicism inhibits him from serving God with all his mind. He asks how the faith is ever to expand if there is no freedom to explore. Does the Holy Ghost really need the methods of the Inquisition, and the faith of Christ require the defence of the Index Expurgatorius? Let the Anglican try to discover what it is that makes many of the younger Nonconformists, who love and admire many things in Anglicanism, forgo them all, because they feel the Nonconformist witness that the Church is not dependent upon the episcopal system must be maintained; let them explore the meaning of the Quaker witness that sacraments are not necessary to the spiritual life.

After this study of oppositions has accomplished its work, then let every Church determinately appropriate everything in other Churches which has been found to feed the spiritual life and preserve a true witness to Christ. Let the absurd veto that one Church must not do what any other Church does be removed; let it be admitted that there has grown up out of our Protestant experiments a new catholicity; but let it also be understood that that catholicity is not operative until it is represented in every Church. This movement would reveal that there already

exists a real unity in diversity, and all that would then remain to be done would be to feel our way to a real provision for both unity and variety in one Catholic Church.

What we crave is a Church in which the sacraments are available for all, declared to be necessary for the perfect life, but not made coercive and declared to be necessary to salvation as that term is commonly understood. Let us leave room in the Church for the rise of a prophetic ministry, and let us make available for that ministry the recognition of the whole Church in the form of episcopal ordination, but let us hear no more of the idea that without it such ministry is useless, invalid, or even irregular; the only thing wrong with it is that it has not been recognised by the whole Church. Especially let us hear no more of the necessity for episcopal ordination where the episcopate itself is certainly not representative of the whole Church; while, for instance, the Church is still divided, or, as in Anglicanism, the Bishops are appointed by Prime Ministers, and are not elected by the clergy or acclaimed by the people. It is a grave question whether such persons are in real episcopal orders at all. Let us have a Church where the full historic faith is maintained, along with an interpretation that is true to the mind of Christ and as broad as His heart; but let us hear no more of any idea that a man shall perish eternally unless he can accept

the Athanasian Creed. Surely the Catholic sacraments have an attraction of their own, Catholic practice can defy competition, and the Catholic faith take care of itself. Give to the whole Church perfect freedom and provide adequate opportunities for fellowship and you can leave the rest to the Holy Ghost. We want to build a great high wall dividing the Church from the world, but let there be three gates on every side, everyone being free to come in or go out, gates which never need to be closed, because the light of the Lamb is the only attraction and the glory of God the only defence. And if things go wrong, if deniers of the faith creep in, heresies abound, and hypocrites disgrace, let us remember that there is only one thing that can refute and expel them: the superior saintliness of those who hold the superior faith and the fire of holiness burning at the heart.

We have said many hard things in this book, but we have tried to say them impartially about all the evils that abound. May we close on another note and appeal to all Christians to seek to know what the mind of Christ is on these matters? In this critical time let us all set ourselves to inquire what the will of God is for this our day and generation. We have not spoken more strongly than we have felt; many things will be disputed and resented, and there is probably much for which the writer needs to ask forgiveness, not only from the

reader but from his Lord. Yet it is only out of a free witness that the whole mind of Christ can be learned; and this is what one quite unworthy and insignificant person does feel as he looks at the Church and world in what seems to him the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Bitter things have been said about all the Churches, but the bitterness springs out of a passionate love for the Church, a great faith in what it was meant to be and can become, and an almost intolerable longing for the One, Holy, Catholic Church.

Finally, may I appeal in the name of Jesus Christ our one Lord and only Saviour: first, to his Holiness the Pope to translate into action some of the Christlike aspirations he has expressed at this critical time, abandon all claim to temporal power and the use of despotic threats, and seriously take in hand the task of reuniting the scattered flock of Christ; second, to his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury to abandon the impossible task of trying to please both the Head of the Church and the rulers of the State, renouncing the princely life and abandoning diplomacy; and, finally, to the Leaders of Nonconformity to drop politics, rid themselves of historical prejudices, and lead us in the "holy war" to which Christ is now calling us.

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